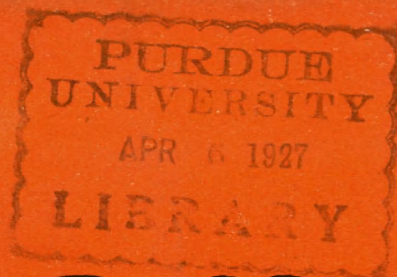


April, 1927



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Labor Age

The National Monthly

OPENING GUNS

1. Unionism That Won't Organize
2. Steel's Silver Lining
3. Will Tallybees "See Red"?

Jehu's Driving at Lynn

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LOIS MacDONALD. Knows the Southern textile worker as an X-ray knows a victim's ribs; recently made study of the Southern field.

ERNST TOLLER. Noted German poet.

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The National Monthly

MAKING OUR FIRE EFFECTIVE

LYNN TELEGRAM-NEWS MONDAY, MARCH 14, 1937

CLAIM PUPILS HAVE HEARD ONLY SYSTEM'S PROPOGANDA

Claiming that only one side of the General Electric Co. plan of employee representation has been presented by the company representatives to the students of business administration at English High school, a delegation of the Central Labor Union will visit Supt. Harvey S. Gruver today and urge him to allow Louis F. Budenz, New York, editor of "Labor Age," who has made a three months' study of the plan at the G. E. Co., to present the other side. Mr. Budenz spoke at the C. L. U.

The American Institute of Mechanical Engineers has a large representation at the local workrooms of the workers in the turbine department who are members of this organization are Charles J. Sawings, mach. supt.; L. E. Grub

In Steel we can work within the company unions at the beginning. In the South we can bring to the workers there a message based on their own background—a message of organization. Everywhere we can hammer, hammer—through the local press, on every available platform, at the factory gates—that Unionism means to fight on and on until it has permanently triumphed. Who, that knows history, will dare to deny that that will be the outcome?

The Kind of Unionism

That Will Not Organize the Basic Industries

By A. J. MUSTE

ON one proposition all the wings, shades and elements in the American labor movement seem agreed, namely that we must organize the unorganized.

It is a colossal problem, as my readers well know. A few groups of workers in this country are well or fairly well organized—the transportation brotherhoods on the railroads, the building trades, the printing trades, and the anthracite miners. Until recently the soft coal miners belonged in this group, but this seems to be no longer the case.

On the other hand, we have a large number of industries in which there is very little if any effective trade union organization. In this list come textiles, iron and steel, automobiles, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, the metal industries in general, public utilities, meat packing, the food industries, transport and others. Leaving aside textiles and mining which constitute cases by themselves, the other unorganized industries just mentioned present certain common characteristics. First they are basic industries, basic in the sense that they employ millions of workers, in the sense that stopping them would quickly and seriously affect the entire life of the nation, in the sense that they are key industries in an advanced industrial system. Second, these industries are all trustified, or far on the way to trustification. They are centrally controlled by small groups. Third, not only is each of these industries in itself trustified and highly centralized, but all of them together are in the hands of the big banking houses. Fourth, they represent colossal aggregations of wealth, beyond the dreams of other countries or other generations. Fifth, mass production marks them all. Their tendency is either to get along without workers almost entirely, except a few relatively skilled technicians, or to make the work of human beings purely mechanical, tightening nut No. 999, or something like that, 900 times a day. Sixth, practically all these industries are marked by a carefully worked out "scientific" labor policy—high wages (or what looks like them), relatively short hours, personnel departments to fit the man to the job and the job to the man, sanitary and well lighted shops, welfare work, employee representation plans, and so on—capitalism on its good behavior, none of your sweat shops, starvation wages, insulting workers, and such like crude stuff of the old management! Seventh (seven is a perfect number) every one of these industries is definitely and defiantly anti-union. When possible, graciously and politely so. When necessary, bitterly, relentlessly and brutally so. Company Unions, Open Shops, American Plan, Industrial Democracy, anything you please except trade unionism.

In these industries are the workers to be organized. When you begin to think of organizing them, the outlook is none too encouraging. When all allowances are made, the A. F. of L. lost membership last year, and in view

of what is happening in the needle trades, for example, will probably lose again this year. It is noteworthy also that once again this past year, not a single gain was registered by the unions having jurisdiction in any of the big industries we are talking about. And this we may point out without joining the company of those whose favorite pastime is throwing mud at the American labor movement in general. What kind of labor movement could with some hope of success tackle the job of organizing these basic industries?

We begin by laying down six propositions as to the kind of labor movement that will not organize them.

1. *The basic industries will not be organized by a labor movement that says it cannot be done.* There is a lot of talk that amounts to that even on the part of people whose heart is in the right place. You cannot organize today because the workers are too well off. You cannot organize because they are not well enough off. You cannot organize because they are too well off to be very sore, and not well enough off to have any nerve. You cannot organize—for any one of a hundred reasons they seem to be ready to fire at you from every side. Nothing was ever done by a man or a movement starting out with that kind of a song.

It is to be feared that there are some who, whether they are clearly aware of it, or not, have passed from saying that it cannot be done to not caring whether it is done or not, who are content to divide the territory with the financial interests, leaving the basic industries to the latter, as long as the trade unions are left comparatively safe and free in the limited field they now occupy. That is certainly the trap into which the "it can't be done boys" are bound to fall eventually.

Imagine the British labor movement confronting masses of unorganized, unskilled workers in 1889 saying it can't be done. Imagine Gompers in 1881 wailing it can't be done.

2. *The basic industries will not be organized by a labor movement that expects the bosses to do the organizing for it.* There is a very real sense in which trade unionism must be "sold" to the employer, the management, and the public, and we can afford to pay more attention to this problem than in the past. Nor does an honest and aggressive trade unionism imply being insulting to employers and such like childishness. I am not referring critically to certain specific cases where for various reasons an employer has become convinced that he ought to deal with a bona fide union and "persuaded his workers to organize". It is merely silly for a union to turn down any chance to organize and serve workers.

But a union is primarily something to be sold to workers, not to anybody else. A bona fide union is like liberty, something you cannot force on people from without, something you cannot slip into their pockets when they

are looking the other way. It is something the workers have to build and in some sense fight for.

Barring the rarest exceptions, the boss will not organize a union. If he does, he will not do it right. And you do not make a company union into a honest-to-God trade union by changing the sign on the plate glass window in front.

3. *The basic industries will not be organized by a labor movement chiefly bent on being respectable or on being thought respectable by those who are its relentless enemies.* A union does not need to put on airs of being tough, hard-boiled, awfully red, or something of that sort in order to prove to itself and to the world that it is real. But no man or movement ever accomplished anything by concentrating attention on what it must not do, on offending nobody, on not seeming to be queer or what not. A going concern needs a program. If it wins, it will be respectable. If it loses, it won't help it any to be respectable. Respectability is not a program nor a battle cry.

4. *The basic industries will not be organized by a labor movement that is afraid of education or superior to it.* Some of the leaders of our movement are making intelligent use of expert service of various kinds, as any modern executive would do—statisticians, economists, financial experts, teachers, psychologists, engineers. They are heartily backing the movement for a more thorough education of the leadership and the rank and file. But there are others who permit a general fear of anything that makes a noise like an intellectual to keep them from efficient administration, and who render lip service only to workers' education.

In a few cases, this is perhaps a plain honest fear of losing their own jobs. Sometimes it arises from that unjustified feeling of inferiority that a man who has worked with his hands is apt to have toward anyone who is slick with his tongue or pen. Sometimes opposition or indifference to education comes from laziness, the desire to let well enough alone, the vague fear that anything new, anything that has not been done before must be dangerous. Whatever the cause for such an attitude may be, the basic industries will not be organized by a movement that is afraid of or superior to education.

The boss is not afraid of education. He spends millions of dollars in equipping schools to train his people. He uses expert service of all kinds, and pays a big price for it. The unions who are to organize the basic industries have to match wits with these fellows. The job cannot be done haphazard, piecemeal, by the old methods. All kinds of factors, economic, social, psychological have to be taken into account. The campaign for a great trustified industry has to be planned as minutely, as skillfully, as expertly as a war campaign. It requires trained leadership and widespread education among the rank and file.

And to say that new methods are needed in the field of trade union organization today is no more a reflection upon the leadership of the past than to say that a steel mill cannot be operated by the methods in use fifty years ago, is a reflection upon the steel masters of that earlier day.

5. *The basic industries will not be organized by a leadership wedded to an arbitrary idea of craft unionism.*

That principle was set forth in so many words by responsible A. F. of L. leaders at the last convention in Detroit and embodied in resolutions adopted there. One need not be any particular type of industrial unionist to say this, nor need one favor the wiping out or ignoring of craft lines where they exist; still less need one be indifferent to the spirit of craftsmanship or good workmanship. But the fact is that modern developments are simply wiping out the workers' "skill" in the old sense of that term, and trade unionism in developing its structure, adapting it to conditions of today, as it has adapted it to changed conditions in the past, must take account of that fact, as company unionism, by the way, has done.

There is a tendency to avoid the dilemma created for some unions by deliberately giving up the effect to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled, and setting about to "build a union of the skilled only." You can't hold the unskilled any way, we are told. Now there is a sense in which the skilled worker in any industry must constitute the backbone of the union. But to confine the union to them, and to give up the organization of the unskilled for a bad job is fatal for two reasons. In the first place, the number of workers retaining a craft in the old sense are so few that if our unions are confined to them, we should have unions but not a labor movement. Unions would be strictly limited "job trusts" like islands in the midst of a huge, raging sea of disorganization, company unionism and open shoppery. In the second place, what has happened in the basic industries is happening also in the skilled trades. Here too, for example, machinery is being rapidly introduced. And as President Noonan of the Electrical Workers pointed out a short time ago, the same company union, open shop interests that control such industries as the General Electric are now also buying control of the great building and construction firms and are introducing their well known labor policies into the building trades too, as fast as they think they can get away with it.

6. *The basic industries will not be organized by a trade union movement that is the tail to a political kite.* Both so-called conservatives and so-called radicals have sinned on this point. There are conservative labor bodies in the country, for example, that are practically nothing but adjuncts to some Republican or Democratic party machine. Labor organizations have to concern themselves with political matters in order to get legislation that will benefit the workers and prevent legislation unfavorable to them and to their unions. But for labor bodies to use politics in order to get something for the workers is one thing; for them to become the tools of politics, dominated by a political boss, the tail to the kite of somebody's political machine, is a very different thing. No labor body to which that has happened will do anything to organize big industry.

On the other hand, one finds sometimes the tendency to subject the trade union movement to the domination of some working class political party. That course is just as fatal. Once again let there be no misunderstanding. There is nothing treasonable to the trade union movement about believing in a labor party or working for its establishment. There is much to be said for the proposition that the existence of a labor party might be of a tremendous help in organizing the basic industries, in developing a sound, aggressive, constructive

labor psychology among the workers of America. But a political movement cooperating with an economic movement, functioning alongside of it is one thing; a political movement seeking to control the economic movement for its own ends, or permitting the trade unions to be primarily a battle field for fighting it out about so-

cial, political, religious, economic theories is a very different thing. American unions that fall into that trap will not organize the basic industries either.

What is needed is—but that is the subject for six propositions that we hope to submit for consideration next month.

The Silver Lining

To The Steel Company Union Cloud

By WILLIAM J. GRIFFITHS

PET snakes have often been known to turn on their owners. Taken to the bosoms of their trainers, pampered and raised to full strength, they suddenly right-about-face and do their masters to death, in fury and rebellion.

Is it not possible that the Honorable Charles Schwab and those of his kind, who are developing company unions in their works, may be merely raising up a pet rattler? May not this creation of theirs suddenly prove useful to the legitimate union movement and an instrument which can be used against the Hon. Schwab and the others?

So it seems to me. While deploring and condemning the shop or company union in its present practices and realizing fully that it is a sham and a fraud, I nevertheless believe that we should study these organizations closely and see if we cannot make good use of them.

Good cannot come out of evil, we are told; and yet, in this case, if we work it right, I can see great good coming out of what is now the largest evil, perhaps, that we have to contend with. Let us picture the state of mind of the workers in the Bethlehem plants, who have never had a real union for any length of time. They are presented with this employer-created organization. It does not mean much. It gives them little. But it does do this at least: It gives these poor deluded employees a very many instances the idea that organization is a needed thing, for the employers themselves have recognized that in forming these company groups. The employer has said, by his act, that there is value in organization. Even though it be his creature, as it always is, this organization is a standing proof of his fear of workers' real unionization. It shows his fear of an organization of their own choosing.

Why Not Join Real Unions?

It is only a short time until the worker will ask: "Why do they oppose our joining regular labor organizations?" The answer to that is clear and will become clear to him: Because the employer, in his greed for more wealth and more profit per unit or man is determined to deny the right of real unionism and in its stead has conceived this sop, with its fancy side frills of group insurance, community welfare, sick and accident insurance, service pins, and the like. Summed up, these things mean "empty phrases"—and are all paid for by the recipient in a lean wage and long hours of employment.

They are paid for a hundred and a thousand fold in

Greater Dividends. The employer has understood that well enough. But the worker will also come to understand that, as time goes by. It must be clear to any one who thinks—whether he be employer or employed—that an industry cannot be confined within the walls of one plant. Nor can conditions be confined within one plant. Company unionism will lend itself to differing conditions in different plants. When that is discovered, there will be unrest. And unrest spells labor turnover.

Now, there is nothing which destroys company earnings more than labor turnover. In the sheet mill (steel) industry, where the writer is employed, it has been said that the cost of breaking in a new man runs as high as \$30 per day. And I have been told by a leading steel manufacturer that it always costs at least \$20 per day to break in a new man.

Company unionism will eventually bring about a shifting of men from place to place, an increase in this turnover. It will make both men and management restless. The management, because of the increased costs in the turnover; the men, because of the new ideals that the traveling worker will bring into the mill.

As to these ideas, it must be understood that company unionism is getting some of these hitherto unorganized workers to think. Before they were forced into the company union, many of these workers were merely unorganized pieces of driftwood. They were concerned with making for their families such wages as they could get, and accepted without question any stipend or any condition that the employer saw fit to hand them. From my experience in these unorganized steel mills, many of the workers did not even know what rate per ton they were getting, taking that which was given them at the pay window without thought about it.

A-B-C's

It is my belief that the company union is opening up the puppy eyes of some of these men to what they are up against. They are getting the A. B. C.'s of cooperative organization. Through facing some of the problems of the industry—even though they be allowed to say or know little about it—they are beginning to think. And the man who thinks cannot fail to be a power some day in effective organization. He will eventually grasp the value of organization as it affects his own true interests. Today he is being hammered at, with the value of organization, for the benefit of the employer; he will shortly

see the value of an organization controlled by himself, and run for the benefit of himself and his fellows.

Many of those now active in company unions, at least in the steel field, may become the men who will lead their brothers out of the clutches of the employers' greed and grasp. As the old saying goes, "The Worm Will Turn". Just as the Passaic textile strikers made up their minds to throw off intolerable conditions, so will the steel workers determine to do the same. In my opinion, from past organizing experience, the next steel organization move will not be another 1919-1920 strike affair. Then, we had nothing more nor less than a movement of an unorganized mob. The ideas of unionism were unknown to the men. All they could grasp was that they ought to stand together, and it was summed up in that one word: "Strike, strike, strike." Beyond that, they could not get, in the short time that they were thrown together in this mob fashion.

Inside the Company Unions!

They had no other purpose than to strike against the wrongs inflicted on them. But of that education which they should have had, into what the trade union movement really meant, and why they should hold on to their unions under every circumstance, they had none. They simply looked on the Movement as a big strike machine,

and when that part of the effort was over, they forgot about everything else. There was no holding together in organization and no realization of the advantage of doing that.

In contrast, under the company union, the men will at least be educated to the value of unity of action with concrete objects at stake, other than the strike itself. They will understand the need for continued united action, after the business of protest is over. That will help to build strong legitimate unions in the steel industry, at least, in the Bethlehem plants.

Let me prophesy, brothers: The Worm Will Turn. The time of the steel workers is coming, even as it came with the New Jersey textile workers. Let us have patience, and use the methods that will help this along. And the greatest present method is to work within the company union, to hammer at the education of the company union workers to take a step beyond where they are today: to show them that they cannot hope for a square deal, if their destiny is controlled by the boss and their activities confined within the four walls of one plant.

If we work inside the company unions, constantly and energetically, informing the membership of the real issues, of how they are being defrauded, etc., we will pave the way for a big and successful revolt for real unionism.

Will the Tallybees "See Red"?

A Story of the South

By LOIS MacDONALD

SEVERAL weeks ago I went into a house where a number of the textile strikers in Passaic live. In a hovel, one room and a bit of space cut off from the hall for another, a woman striker was living with her family. She was the sole bread winner for a family consisting of her mother and three children, the youngest a baby two or three months old. When we went down to the street we stepped out into one of the most icy winds of the winter which was blowing down from the hills half covered with snow. The woman sent the two oldest children off to the soup-kitchen to get some hot food for supper. She shivered as she turned to us again, for she was wearing a thin jacket as her only wrap on this bitterly cold day.

"It's mighty hard on them," she said, as she watched the children out of sight. "And it's harder on the old folks too because they know more about what is happening. But we've been out almost a year now and we got to stick it out or we lose everything. I'll stay out another year if it takes it to get the union and better times."

A little later we followed to the soup-kitchen. Children crowded up to the tables and were served a meal of soup, bread, and milk by a number of women who moved about, filling the cups and bowls and passing the bread along the line. Most of the children of the strikers were of foreign born parents, and over the clatter of the dishes there was a sound of foreign tongues as the women talked

to the children. Throughout the scene was a spirit of cheer on the part of the children and of strong, quiet determination on the part of the women.

These scenes were in sharp contrast to other scenes which I remembered in other groups of textile workers with whom I was more familiar, the workers in the Southern mills. Last year I spent some months in the company towns of the Southern textile industry. It was spring time and I sat on the steps of the company houses and talked with many workers about their opinions of their work, of their chances for advancement, of their plans for their children, and of the opportunities which their towns offered to them. Most of them had had some experience with organized labor, for numbers had been members of the unions which were organized in 1919 and the few years following. The strong arm methods used to break the unions were successful in most instances, though the short experience has left some marks.

"Yes, ma'am," said one woman who was talking to me as she rested from her stretch of eleven hours in a spinning room, where she frequently put in over-time. "My old man was an officer in the union onst but neither one of us would cross that road to hear a union speech tonight. It aint because the union is a bad thing neither. It's good, only Southern folks aint a-goin to stand for no more union any time soon. Part of it is pure, down right ignorance and the other is good, hard sense. Most don't know what it is about, but then there ain't no

LABOR AGE

more chance for a union than there is of me a-flyin'. The only place you get with a union is out in the road and no chance at another job or house."

These expressions of opinion are interesting in that they showed the two sets of workers present very different problems, both of which must be understood and an approach built out of them if the Labor Movement is to continue its efforts into the great unorganized sections of industry.

The Passaic group is made up of many nationalities. The workers live in a city where to a certain extent their movements are free; at least they do not live in houses which the companies for which they work control directly. Passaic is in the midst of a great industrial section, where industries have been going for some time. There is a long distance between the boss and the worker and under those circumstances the chances are that a more independent spirit will develop among the workers. Nearness to a center like New York makes some difference too. It is possible to get backing from the organized groups there, and also to make use of a radical public opinion, small as it is when compared to the total mass of the population. Each of these conditions, and many others, contributes to the problem of organizing the workers. If the organization is to be successful methods must be employed which will take these problems into account.

"Pure Anglo-Saxon."

The Southern textile workers, on the other hand, offer an entirely different set of problems, which calls for a different technique in organization. Industrial development in that section is a relatively recent thing, and the workers are somewhat new in the system. The foreign element is a negligible factor, as the Southern operatives are almost "one hundred per cent pure Anglo-Saxon." They are natives of the Southern states, coming either from the mountains or from the tenant farms. In either case they have come from conditions where making a living was a difficult matter at best. Life as it was, trying to grow corn on a rocky hill side or cotton on "shares," was cheerfully exchanged for life at the mill. Even though the hours be long and the mills hot and dirty, the little bit of money came in at the end of every week. It meant a trip to town and perhaps a movie on Saturday night.

"It's just grand, bettern hoin' cotton. Folks living right besides you, and there ain't no bother about the weather and the crop." "Better let well enough alone. I got enough for my vittles and a little bit uv terbacker. I say let a man keep to his own business." "The Bible teaches a man should be contend with his lot. Any runnin' around after somethin' diffrent is shor goin' to get him in trouble if not in this world in the next one." These are fairly typical statements, especially from the older workers who have more vivid recollections of days which they consider worse. It is interesting to notice that this same group will, in the next breath, pine for the fresh air, freedom, and "good country water" of the old days.

These workers live in mill villages, the company towns of the industry. Each mill has its village on the land adjoining it. In this way the moves and the interests of the workers can be closely watched. If a man's actions

are disagreeable or arouse suspicions, he not only loses his job but his family is moved out of the company house. His record precedes him to any place where he might go to look for work. There is no appeal for him. The company town in an unincorporated town and is presided over by a company policeman whose duty it is to "protect the interests of the company." When asked how the town was governed one manager replied, "We govern like the Czar of Russia. We are monarchs of all that we survey."

The other activities of the town are company born and bred—churches, schools, movies and all the rest. In many cases elaborate systems of welfare work have been put in by the management, sometimes from philanthropic motives, more often to soothe the possible feelings of dissatisfaction on the part of the workers.

"Just One Large Family."

The manager is usually a man who has grown up in the business. From the semi-professional mill president of the old days, when the infant industry was hailed as the savior of the Old South and was indeed the salve to the wounded pride of those who had made an economic blunder, that of resting all prosperity on slavery, this modern manager has inherited a paternalistic attitude towards his workers. They are children of his and the mill is "just one large family." One always notices, however, that such utterances come only from those who figure as the fathers in the families. Even the best of the managers play Santa Claus to keep off labor troubles. During the organization drive in 1919 and the years just following they lived up to the proverbial reputation of Santa, who brings "birch switches and stockings full of ashes to the bad boys."

The great public, which is neither operative or manager, and which has no direct relation to the industry other than possible ownership of a few shares of stock, adds an additional side to the picture. There is every variety of "blurb" being plained in it. This runs the lists from the unintelligible attempts at analysis by the ultra-sociologist to the sentimental twaddle of Chamber of Commerce origin. If one is attentive long enough, he finds that the latter is not even an attempt to look the facts in the face. The general tone is that the South has some super formula which will reverse the regular order of history, that this business of attracting industry is the cause for which man strives, and that nothing must put a possible stumbling block in its path no matter what the price. This view is admirably set forth by a spokesman of the faith who said in a public address—"Southern industry is a moral venture. It is an adventure in the realms of human possibility. It is the venture of seeing the potential worth of men. The pioneers of Southern industry were pioneers of God. They were prophets of God, doing what God wanted done. Southern industry is a divine institution. . . . When the first whistle blew, the people flocked to the light from barren places. These cotton mills were established that people might find themselves and be found. It is a spiritual movement."

Those who are fed on this bunk look at a mill village where rent is cheap and where coal is sold at cost (the latter commodity being always kept in the bath tubs of the workers, according to what 'they' say, and it does not matter if there happen to be no bath tubs in the

houses—the story is just as good) and applaud when the ungrateful “lint-heads,” “millites” or “tallybees” are put down by their kind bosses for being “red,” this term meaning that the ungrateful wretch has asked for a recognition of his rights in a democracy.

Can History Be Reversed?

There are few people, either within or without the industry, who are willing to look at the situation and analyse it as a normal problem in economic evolution. Reversing history is an intriguing thought, but how and why! There seems to be very little attempt to attack the old forces which underly historical processes. There are naturally certain local characteristics but those are superficial things. The actual development from a technical and business standpoint is the same as in the sections where the same industry has grown up. The fundamental problem for the worker is the same in South Carolina, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Lancashire County. Therefore, it seems reasonable to expect that somewhat the same course will follow in each section, provided there is no special outside factor as that which faces the Lancashire industry. Robert Owen found many years ago that his mill village, with refined methods of paternalistic management, was no solution to the problem of the English operative. Lucy Larcum and her friends in the early days of the New England industry lived in “company boarding houses” where the keeper of the house had to render to the company periodically an account of their boarders “with regard to their general conduct, and whether they are in the habit of attending public worship.” Utility of nationality exists to a very high degree in Lancashire County, where the cotton operatives are with very few exceptions organized into unions. What is even more important is the fact that, as an industrial system grown older, class lines are more clearly drawn.

There are evidences of stirrings among the Southern operatives at the present time, though they are faint and somewhat groping. Probably the majority would not support an active union when the price is what it is. The signs are more indirect than that. The younger generation is receiving more education and it is demanding more of the material things of life. It comes from good authority that many of those in managerial positions are beginning to wonder where all this education is going to end, and who is going to do the work when boys and girls can go into other occupations.

The parents, with few exceptions, say that they do not want their children to go into the mill.

“It’s hard, dirty work and you get nothing for it. The mill is the place for them that can do nothing better. I don’t want my children on a mill hill all their lives. . . . I’ll work my hands to the bone and me and the old woman will live on bread and water to give them a chance at something better.” This statement of a father of five children is typical of the hopes of parents. Few

have particular trades and occupations in mind. Their feeling is negative rather than positive. The ironic part of this is that it is the unusual case when a child does escape into some other kind of work.

The Business of Organizing.

To the person who is interested in seeing some plan for organizing these workers made, the situation offers peculiar conditions and problems which must be met. Just how that can be done is outside the scope of this article and of the experience of the writer, yet to even the casual observer certain things are obvious. The paramount difficulty is the company town. Some method must be developed for interesting the workers in some activities which are not on company property. These activities, moreover, must be such that will make an appeal to a relatively backward group of workers, backward in experience rather than in native capacity. There must be a slow, hard pull which will bring out native initiative. There is, as is well known, a great prejudice against “foreigners and Yankees.” It is very unlikely that these workers who have practically no class feeling will bury the hatchet and give much confidence on a class basis when it is at the expense of national, sectional, and religious lines. Any other effort will have a double battle to fight, that of the right to organize and a probable mixture of the factors mentioned above.

Somehow the workers must be given a glimpse of something ahead which will make them *demand* more of life and work than a place to sleep, food to eat, and some tobacco in between times. The ultimate ideals of the Labor Movement need to be burned into their minds. If necessary these ideals may be couched in terms of their religion, so that a man will not say that “the Bible teaches that a man must be contented with his lot,” but perhaps that “a laborer is worthy of his hire,” and that every man has a right to his fair chance at the good life.

These things must not only make an appeal to the workers but must get some cooperation from the communities at large. In this instance, it is likely that some backing from the communities is of equal importance with interest from the workers. The old songs are being sung out from pulpit, press, and the streets. Workers live in company houses where they are more than usually dependent. In their effort there needs to be an intelligent group in the background, a group whose chief role is that of interpreter. Otherwise, as a prominent labor official said recently, “It is too great a burden to put on any group of workers when the whole town, without the usual exception of a few dissenters, curses them.”

In a number of instances welfare work had been followed by a further scattering of crumbs in the shape of a semblance of democratic control, the works committee. It is just as likely that the workers will take what seems to come to them for a time, but that they may eventually reject the crumbs and demand the whole loaf.

MYSTERIOUS MR. MASON

Well, we are running it in the next issue. Space limits kept it out of this number: The thrilling story of George Gendron and the Mysterious Mr. Mason, labor spy, who got him to go to Florida. It is an interesting account of labor spy methods, that all will enjoy. Also coming: BILL SMITH IN SHELBROOKE—another real thriller.

The Way of The World



Life

CAUSE AND EFFECT



Providence News

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London New Leader

Talk of disarmament is heard in the international statesmen's world. Our own Mr. Coolidge has started the ball a-rolling. In the opinion of the non-partisan humorous weekly, LIFE, the cause for his hasty decision for a world conference is based on his predicament, pictured on this page. It is a rather sad inconsistency, we will all admit, that the administration talks disarmament, while refusing arbitration on the Nicaragua-Mexico issue. The A. F. of L. has most correctly set itself against this imperialistic policy, which will only breed for our country the hatred and suspicion of other nations. Britain and Japan think of disarmament because of their sad economic conditions. One million Japanese, at least, are out of work at the present hour.

As to China, it is breaking ground, in its magnificent struggle for democracy and freedom. Shanghai will probably be its Yorktown. IF—the nations of the world allow Canton to carry through its democratic policy for the Chinese masses.

Vienna Today

How the Socialist-Labor Government Houses the People

By ERNST TOLLER

We have thought that it would interest our readers to run an occasional account of what the workers of other lands are doing. The first of these intimate sketches is by the noted German poet, Toller. In Austria the Socialist and Labor Movements are closely allied, and we have here a pen picture of their joint work for the Viennese working population.

(Translated from the German)

"REPUBLIC SQUARE!" cried the conductor of a motor bus in Berlin. People standing on the foot-board laugh. "Wotcher want me to say?" said the conductor indignantly. "Duty is duty."

This little episode, observed recently by a friend of mine, is symptomatic and instructive. For years there was a Socialist majority in Berlin. Of its labors only the name "Republic Square" remains—and that is merely an official designation.

My companion in the Vienna-Berlin train tells me that he is an Austrian manufacturer. We discuss Viennese local government policy. The subject puts him in a red rage.

"You in Germany have reasonable Socialists. But ours—worse than the Bolsheviks. The middle classes can no longer exist in Vienna. They are slowly strangling the capitalists. Without a great outcry. Gradual bloodletting. Not long ago I went to look at one of the great workers' palaces; I thought I should burst with rage. And people like us must limit our expenditure more and more. What can one do? I have dismissed our fourth maid-servant and the chauffeur. Just think, I pay a tax of 50 schillings for the first maid-servant, for the second a further 150, for the third 600 more, and for the fourth another 1200. Nobody can afford that. Vienna is going to the dogs. The owners of the night clubs have said that they will close if Breitner does not come to his senses. One of my friends, who owns a night club, told me that a bottle of French sack costs eight schillings, besides 16 schillings tax; and of the 24 schillings Breitner gets 60 per cent in communal taxes in the night clubs."

I too have recently seen what the Vienna Town Council is doing; it has a strong Socialist majority, and I saw Socialism in practice to an extent which struck me powerfully and destroyed the feeling of depression which is becoming the settled mood of German Left wing Socialists. In Austria the Left wing remains within the Socialist Party.

The Town Council has secured immense revenues by means of the tax on houses. The leader in financial policy is Breitner, best loved of the people, best hated by the capitalist classes.

Houses and flats are taxed according to their amenities

and the number of rooms. On small dwellings the tenant pays a merely nominal sum in rent and tax (for rents are determined by legal enactment), but for an eight-roomed house the tenant pays 300 schillings a month in communal tax. The rate per head for house tax in Vienna is 172 schillings, whilst in America, for example, the rate is only 56 schillings, although wages and salaries are for the most part higher. From the yield of the house tax workers' dwellings, children's playgrounds, maternity homes, temporary homes for orphans and deserted children, workers' colleges, public baths, and so on, are erected. The best architects are engaged to plan the houses.

Winarsky-Hof

The Winarsky-Hof, named after a Socialist worker now dead, is one of these vast buildings, consisting of a number of houses with airy courts between them, planted with trees. This building contains eight hundred families, and three thousand four hundred souls. Of these, twelve hundred are members of the Socialist Party. (There are three hundred thousand organized Socialists in Vienna.) The smallest flat includes a bedroom, kitchen-living-room, and entrance; most have two rooms and a kitchen. Every room has a parquette floor, every house a central washing and drying room, a common kindergarten, library, hall for meetings, cinema, and committee room. Just think what it means for working women, to be able to leave their children at home when they go to work, to pop their washing into an electric boiler in the great wash-house, and to finish with a turn of the hand what used to take them one day, or even two; besides which, the clothes no longer fill the home with steam while they are being washed and dried.

I look at the library, with its tables and chairs designed by Peter Behrens. I open the catalogue of belles-lettres at random and read under the letter F: Flake, Flaubert, Fontane, France, Frank. I go to the cinema, a great hall which can be converted into three smaller ones by a mechanical device which lets down walls. From the school near-by the children are watching a natural history film, which teaches them geology in a really vivid way. The programme for the evening announces the Russian film, "The Bay of Death", and "Man Amongst Men". From time to time good concerts, lectures, and dramatic entertainments are held in the cinema.

No one who has seen the former slums of Vienna can realize what the town has accomplished.

On every house, clear to be seen, the legend is written up on a tablet: "Built from the yield of the house tax",—a joy to the rich.

The architectural appearance of the buildings is various. Those erected a few years ago (for example, the Fuchsenfeldhof) are decorative, like palaces; those put up recently are plain and sober, designed for use.

LABOR AGE

Decorative Gaiety

It seemed to me significant that as a general rule the workman likes decorative gaiety, and lacks appreciation of modern simplicity in architecture. Why? Modern architecture has turned from gay luxury and excess to simplicity. It has passed beyond luxury, and has taken over from it only so much as serves its new purpose. The worker has grown up in want. Everything in his former dwelling was grey and uniform. Luxury for him was a dream of desire. Think of his love for films where the action takes place in magnificent houses. He longs for a little decoration, which he may be able to recognize only in the form of frivolous ornament, and here once more is sober simplicity. The difference in quality between this kind of simplicity and the simplicity which he knew in the past is not felt by him, and so his dissatisfaction is easy to understand. It seems that the present generation of workers must follow the errors of the capitalist classes for a time, in order that they may win the power of combatting them with the innermost conviction.

It is true that in such large buildings there are small squabbles. For the people who enter their doors are animated but little by cooperative consciousness. One woman is annoyed because another in the central wash-house peers at her washing; another woman declares that her neighbor is ordering her about. But it may be observed that these quarrels, which are settled by a specially constituted House Committee, are growing fewer and fewer, and that cooperative consciousness is on the increase. In cases where one tenant loses his work, his neighbors club together and help in a fine spirit of solidarity.

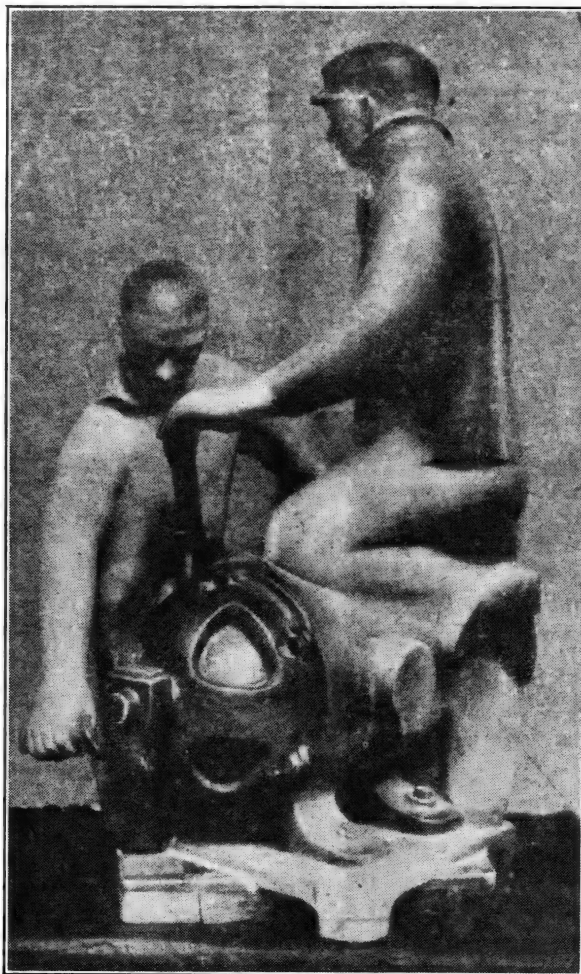
The Old Adam

It is another question whether these agglomeration of flats—palaces or barracks—are the ideal solution of the housing problem in large towns. I will confess honestly that, much as I admire what has been accomplished, settlements or colonies seem to me wiser. There are a number of well arranged settlements in Vienna also. But a ring of settlements round a large town is only possible if good and rapid transport exists; otherwise the worker wastes two or three hours in travelling to and from the factory. Nor am I blind to the fact that there is a danger, for those who are the product of our modern school and education, that in a settlement they may become quarrelsome and narrow—cultivating their cabbages, squabbling with their neighbors, wanting to be left in peace, and troubling about their brother workers not at all.

Always the same problem confronts us: we must create new forms of organization, but we must realize

that the old Adam will enter into them, and that only kindly compulsion will restore in his soul the starved instincts of cooperation.

MODERN INDUSTRY



"Industry," by Otto Gutfreund, of Czecho-Slovakia.
In the International Exhibition of the Brooklyn Museum

Modern industry is attracting the world of art. The new development, whereby man is being all but merged into the machine, has been the subject of a number of creative productions. We see here a most interesting view of the industry of 1927. Man and machine are almost one; mass production has brought that about. It makes a new set of circumstances which we must face in raising our voices for workers' freedom.

WHERE DO WE COME IN?

Stop, look, listen—to this tale of woe. We are now informed by the U. S. Department of Commerce that dividend and interests payments by American corporations in 1926 amounted to \$4,335,912,000. A neat sum, verily. It is a quarter of a billion dollars larger than the handout of 1925. Dividend payments have gone up 34 per cent since 1913, while interest payments have risen 235 per cent! Which means: the exploiters are becoming more and more coupon-clippers only. To which you may ask: Where do we come in? Brothers, the answer is: WE DON'T.

The 5-Day Week

1. Why It Is in Order

By SOLON DE LEON

IT was Steinmetz, the American electrical genius, who arraigned our use of improved machinery for adding so little to our "efficiency of life." Efficiency of life, Steinmetz declared, "is measured by how large a part of our life we have at disposition for ourselves, not occupied by necessities, but free to fulfill life's aim as we understand it." On this basis, counting out the hours spent in sleeping, eating, and working, he showed that American life was 28.1 per cent efficient with the 10-hour day 100 years ago, and only 35.1 per cent efficient with the eight-hour day in 1916. If we could fully realize on our mechanical advancements, reducing hours to four a day, and cutting working days from 300 to 200 a year, we might, Steinmetz said, raise the efficiency of life to 53.4 per cent, or double what it was a century earlier—which "would be an advancement worth while."

History has seen the American workers successively reduce their working day from the colonial "sun to sun" to 12 hours, to 10 hours, and then, for more than half of them, to nine or even eight. The working week has for large numbers been shortened from six days to five and one-half. Even in the necessarily continuous industries, such as steel and railroading, seven-day labor is being slowly abolished. Reduction of hours is the one phase of industrial life where American workers have without question improved their condition. They are now definitely entered upon the next stage of the struggle, the stage of winning 52 additional free days yearly for themselves, and thus considerably increasing their "efficiency of life," by means of the five-day week.

Pressure of Modern Work

Prominent among the reasons for the five-day week is the nervous pressure of modern work and life. For years public health workers and vital statisticians have been pointing out that our figures for increased length of life are more apparent than real. It is true that the average expectation of life from boyhood is being increased, due to the tremendous advantages in overcoming birth-accidents and the diseases of the early years. But much more significant for the present purpose is the fact that once a man or woman has reached middle life, the process of breaking down now takes place at an earlier average age than before. As far back as 1912, Elmer E. Rittenhouse of the Equitable Life Assurance Society called attention to this development, prominently noted only in the United States. He said:

"The average length of an American life has increased about 15 years during the past century, and yet the span of life is being shortened. During the last 30 years the general death rate has decreased approximately 25 per cent, and yet the chances of early death after passing the age of 40 have steadily increased."

The increase in mortality among persons past two-score years, Rittenhouse estimated at about 27 per cent.

Clearly, present-day society is saving its babies, but killing its adults.

Every investigator into the subject has laid the blame at the door of our high-pressure living. Only recently the New York Tuberculosis and Health Society reported that heart diseases now cause one-fifth of all deaths in the metropolis, rising from third as a cause of death in 1910 to first place in 1926. Before this revelation could be comfortably forgotten, former Health Commissioner Darlington explained that the present pace "brings physical ills that more than counterbalance economic gains. The rise of heart diseases in recent years probably has been due to increasing habits of hurry, the strenuous life, and the effects of present existence on emotions."

Our work-life sets the pace for our play-life. To provide the requisite thrill, our recreation tends to become at least as intense as the hours of confined effort which precede it. And those hours of confined effort are growing steadily more intense. In all American industries the increase of the workers' hourly productivity from 1914 to 1925 has been:

	Per Cent		Per Cent
Slaughtering	10.7	Cement	57.8
Shoes	16.5	Steel	59.0
Paper	25.7	Oil Refining	77.3
Sugar	27.3	Automobiles	210.0
Leather	28.2	Rubber Tires	211.0
		Flour	39.0

Such increases cannot take place without exacting closer attention, more rapid motions, and more exhausting effort from the employees. In the face of this whole trend, every argument made on health grounds for the shorter work day applies with equal force to the five-day week.

Reduction of Unemployment

Another reason for the five-day week is the tendency it would have to reduce the number of totally unemployed and to distribute work more evenly. Averaging good years with bad, from 10 to 12 per cent of American workers are continually out of a job. In the worst years the wave of unemployment engulfs 6,000,000 of our 36,000,000 wage-earners, or one in six. Linked with the higher productivity already noted, has gone a lasting decline in the number of workers engaged. Despite the enormous business booms of 1925 and 1926, at no time since 1923 has employment in manufacturing industries regained the volume it had in that year.

Secretary of Labor Davis himself declared that the greatest source of unemployment in the country is the over-development of industry. "The fact is," he stated, "that our productive machinery cannot run 300 days in the year without producing a stock so large that it cannot all be sold in this country nor in any and all other countries." In the boot and shoe industry, for instance,

LABOR AGE

14.5 per cent of the establishments, employing 60.4 per cent of the wage-earners in the industry, would if run full time produce 95 per cent of the shoes sold.

In such a situation, the establishment of a shorter week for all would go far toward providing, in ordinary times, a degree of opportunity for each. It would be a wide-spread application of the enlightened union principle of equal distribution of work.

A Long Week-End

Further should be considered the more than doubled gain to the workers in having two consecutive days free in each seven. One day, for a heavy manual or mental worker, provides merely a breathing spell, to gather strength for next week's stint. Two days, with the preceding evening, would render the free time much more flexible and worth while. It would open the way for constructive use of rested leisure, and for vivid and colorful new experience. One day's respite is often spent in sleep and chores. Two days would allow for wide-ranging excursions, a complete and welcome change of scene and interest, solid reading and study, and for the development of artistic and creative leanings now crushed down by excessive and monotonous toil. Not the least of the benefits of the long week-end would be increased time to devote to upbuilding the trade union movement.

Workers' Right to Fruits of Progress

Finally, the five-day week is called for by the workers' right to benefit to the full by the fruits of industrial progress. The time is past when those who labor need justify every crumb of improvement in their conditions by the plea that without it they cannot exist. Minimum wage scales set so low as just "to let the employee sheer starvation shirk"; factory sanitation and safety measures so meager as merely to make the work-place habitable; standards of working hours regulated by what the laborer can stand up under and barely survive—these are relics of the dark ages of economic insufficiency on the earth. "An overtired person is literally a poisoned person, poisoned by his own waste products." So argued Louis D. Brandeis in 1915, in the famous brief defending the Oregon eight-hour law for women. The argument won the case. But today a new attitude is in place. Poisoned or not poisoned, the worker is entitled to the briefest possible working time which modern machine methods will enable him to secure. To be satisfied with less is to forego his historic birthright.

Not a New Proposal

The five-day week is not a new proposal. The younger generation of business and professional people have long since, on occasion, taken it unto themselves. Teachers have traditionally enjoyed it as a regular feature of their contracts. Department store clerks and office workers in large cities are more and more coming to expect it during the summer months.

Among manual workers, also, the shorter work-week has already gained a foothold. Last year the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics found that of 764,596 union members in 66 cities, 4.7 per cent had the five-day week for the entire year, and 0.5 per cent had it for part of the year. That is, about one man or woman in 20, of these organized workers, had two days free each week

or nearly each week. Clothing, building and printing are the industries where the five-day program has made greatest headway. Almost one-third of the men's clothing industry, mainly in New York, Baltimore, and Cincinnati, is on this basis. The New York furriers under their new 1926 agreement are to work five days for eight months yearly. The cloth hat and cap makers in New York and Philadelphia begin this schedule on July 1, 1927. Women's cloakmakers and dressmakers in New York, Boston, and Cleveland, after determined struggles, won this right, to begin June 4, 1928. The women's custom tailors in New York are on the five-day footing. Building trades workers who have two days' regularized leisure each week include the lathers of five cities including Boston and Seattle; the painters of New York, Boston, Portland (Ore.), and five other cities; the plasterers of New York, Boston, Portland (Ore.), and six other cities; and the plumbers of Portland (Ore.) Equally progressive are the granite cutters in four cities, and stone cutters in seven cities. In the printing trades the five-day week is already in operation for many newspaper compositors, mainly on foreign-language papers; for photo-engravers on night work in New York and eight other cities; for web-pressmen on night work in Boston and three other cities; and for stereotypers on night work in New York, Boston, Chicago, and four other cities. Certain upholsterers in New York and Philadelphia, bakers, laundry workers, paper box makers, foundry and machine shop employees, and workers in a few occupations in iron and steel mills, are other unionists who already have a two-day period of rest, recreation, and mental growth after each week's toil. Among the unorganized are Henry Ford's 100,000 employees, who last September were given the five-day week—with a corresponding initial reduction in pay.

Labor for Five-Day Week

Thus the labor movement, in many of its larger sections, is definitely embarked on the five-day week. Probably the first official pronouncement on the issue was made by the American Federation of Labor at its Seattle convention, 1913:

"We heartily commend the five-day work week," stated the resolution then adopted, "to the thoughtful and favorable consideration of all organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L., to the end that the shortening of the week will be conducive to the physical, material, intellectual, and moral welfare of the toilers."

The Executive Council was authorized to promote the principle.

The next time the question came up on a national scale was in 1919, when the United Mine Workers included the five-day week among the demands in its short-lived strike. Employing-class indignation rose high at this evidence of laziness on the part of the coal-diggers. The record shows, however, that in demanding the five-day week the miners were asking for more, not for less, work.

"The miners of the United States at the present time," recites the resolution introduced by an Illinois sub-district, "can produce fully 50 per cent more coal than is actually consumed in normal times, compelling such miners to remain idle half the time . . . the only remedy for such conditions is to reduce the hours of labor."

DUMMIES AND DUMMY DAYS

The Tinniest-Lizziest of 'Em All

By BILL BROWN, Boomer

HENNERY FORD and the Prince of Wales—you know him, Ned Windsor—must be reincarnations of the same guy; they're so blamed much alike. Both of those there boys just naturally tumble onto the front pages of the newspapers every morning.

Hennery, he tumbles off one of those there hobby horses of his, and Windsor tumbles off one of those there plug horses. And we, the mob, goes and gets all excited. "Oh, my!" we says, "wouldn't it be turrible, if that there dear young prince would break his neck, some day! What would England do?" Or: "Wouldn't it be bad to have Hennery lose one million out of his two billions for exhibiting around that his money power is much stronger than his brain power?"

But Sandy Hook—what calls himself a "cynic"—ups and says that he is thinking all the time that they've got a dummy to do the falling for Neddy, just like they got for the big motion picture stars. They just let the dummy fall off the horses, to keep the "loyal people" of England scared that the prince might die and all kind of terrible things happen to the British Empire out of it. Well, that might be. 'Cause the prince is the nearest to a motion picture actor what we've seen yet. He's visiting the slums sections now, for fear the Labor Party will come again into power. A nice Labor prince would be a treat, don't you know?

But I'm thinking that Hennery, for his part, don't need a dummy. He'd fill the bill himself; just cut out for it. He's got all over the papers as the richest guy in this here globe. He's the inventor of the Tin Lizzie and the Tin Lizzie-Man.



Tin Lizzie and Tin-Lizzie Man



Cal and the Farmer

The Tin Lizzie is a great invention. And the Tin Lizzie-Man is a greater. But God beat Hennery to it, at that. 'Cause He invented Hennery, they say, and that there invention is the Tinniest Lizziest of them all. Hennery, in fact, if I do say it, is the Champion Tin-Lizzy Brain of the world. When it's on Tin Lizzies it works without a hitch, turning out those there cars and raking in those there dollars. But when it gets into other fields, poor Hennery isn't hitting on all fours at all.

He's the big example of the poor little rich man—rich in pocket and poor in brains. He's just another guy what gives us the idea we's had for a long time, that it takes a certain lack of brains to make money. (We've never made money ourselves. Therefore, we're more and more attracted to that idea.)

Hennery's gone and got Jew-phobia, and is playing Cain among the farmers out of it. Those there cooperatives have made more money for the farmers than they've seen for many a day. But Hennery's dead set against them, 'cause a Jewish boy started the whole idea. A pure Nordic must start it, or Hennery is dead against it. And some of Hennery's Tin Lizzie-men shout: "Horray, we'll let Hennery bleed us, if he'll only bleed the Jews." It's a nice thing for the Open Shop, to keep us all divided on these here questions.

It's too bad a Jewish boy didn't write the McNary-Haugen Farmers' Bill. That would have given Cal a good reason for vetoing it. He just had to go, as it was, and stick his pen right through the battling farmer. Without much reason about it, at all.

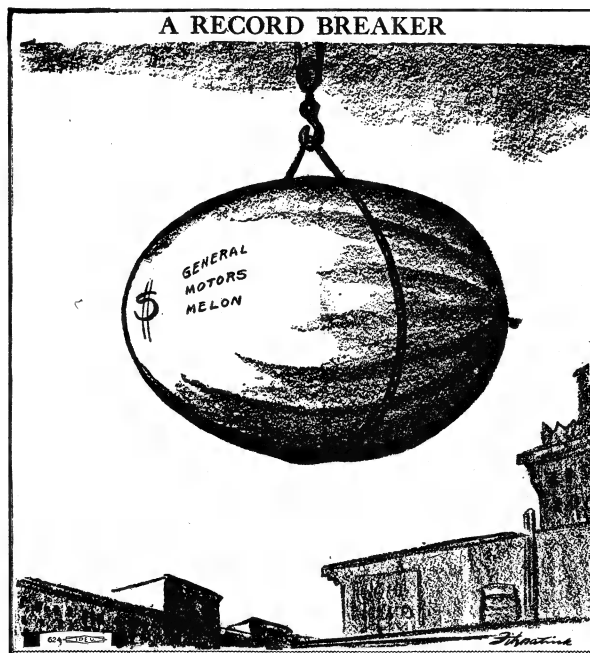
But, then, Cal is Andrew Mellon's dummy. He makes the high jumps and takes the spills whenever Andrew speaks the word.

Fool's Day comes once a year, so we understand. But every day is dummy's day. And now my horny-handed friend: Whose dummy are you?

Our 'Onest Overlords



St. Louis Post-Dispatch



St. Louis Post-Dispatch

RIGHT OVER THE WHITEWASH



Newark News

C. W. Barron, editor of the renowned WALL STREET JOURNAL, has dubbed Edward Doheny "an honest pioneer." It is a fine example of what some of our friends would term "capitalistic class consciousness." Capitalist ethics is a fearful and wonderful thing.

Mr. Doheny happens to be, from the record, one of the blackest blackguards that ever posed upon our public stage. A jury accommodatingly acquitted him of criminal actions in the famous Elk Hills steal. The United States Supreme Court, having a fine sense for proper forms, could not stomach such a whitewash. They openly and notoriously proclaimed him to be a crook.

We can well believe the assertions of the Mexican Government that the said Doheny secured the large majority of the oil lands now being fought for by our State Department, through fraud and bribery. It is in line with his previous "honest" activities. All of which fits in well with the General Motors Co's record, also. It may be difficult to persuade the auto gentlemen that there is anything immoral about their large dividends—at the expense of their automatic workers. But the effect is just the same. Our anti-labor overlords can all be lumped together in "honesty," so far as workers are concerned.

get in the next week's pay envelope. That can be readily understood when we see how the business is worked.

The Mad Race

Under the system—the Bedeau task system—the worker, or the particular operation, is given a basic rate, which covers all workers on a given operation or group of operations. This is classed as a “day rate”—or to be exact, an hourly rate—and is supposed to be **guaranteed** the workers as a minimum hourly rate, which they are supposed to get whether they “earn” it or not. On each job or operation the workers are timed by so-called experts, with stop-watches, to find out how long it takes to carry through the job or operation. On the basis of this timing, a price is set for the operation.

Instead, however, of establishing a money price—as, for instance, 60 cents each or 60 cents per hundred, as the case may be—the price set is what is known as a “point price”. A point, be it known, equals one minute. A worker or group of workers, therefore, who have a job to do which the stop-watchers find can be done in one hour, is given a price of 60 points for that job.

Then, the mad race of speeding up production begins. If a worker gets the job priced at 60 points (or one hour's work) and turns it out in 48 minutes instead, a premium is his reward. Hurray for the premium, you may say. Every worker is worthy of his hire. But, regretfully, we must report: there is a catch to it. The full value of the 12 minutes or 12 points saved by the overzealous working person goes not to him or her. Only 75 per cent is allocated in that direction. The other 25 per cent goes to the company!

In justification of this appropriation of 25 per cent of the premium, the company claims that it hands this amount out in additional bonuses to the foremen, stock-room help, etc., all of whom are on a straight day rate. This bonus encourages the foremen and stock-roomers, it is said, to hurry along the stock and to cooperate in speeding up the actual producers. Unnecessary delays, such as would be caused by waiting for stock, are thereby eliminated.

Most logically, this system has just the effect that it has been planned to have. The “incentive” is given the workers to cut each other's throats by competing with each other, to see who can get the work out the fastest. Down, down go the prices all the time—as the foremen “whoop it up” and the stop-watchers discover new means for beating down the rates. With their eyes on their own bonuses, the foremen and gang bosses become the “drivers” described by the workers to me. “The more they can drive the worker, the more premiums they get as individuals.” Yea, verily, the quotation from Holy Writ which heads this article applieth to the Darling system which the West Lynnes now enjoy.

Catch No. 2

To Catch No. 1, we must add Catch No. 2. We have noted that the base rate is supposed to be paid to men and women workers, whether they “earn” it or not. That turns out in practice to be a violent supposition. If he or she, poor soul, continues to fall below the base rate on a couple of occasions, the West Lynn plants see them no more. Some excuse, very readily dug up by the G. E. staff artists, is found to eliminate this “inefficient” person, and to replace him or her by someone who will

be a faster worker. It is supposed, further, that the base rate is to be paid the worker if he or she be waiting for work or stock. That, alas, is Catch No. 3. The worker hanging around, waiting for the work or stock to turn up, is soon told by the foreman that there is no such arrival, and that he, the foreman, does not really know when the work or stock will come along. “You can go home if you want to,” he advises the idle worker. Necessarily, that relieves the company of any obligation to pay the base rate, for the “hanging around” time. And both company and foreman know very well that the worker will not go home, in perhaps nine cases out of ten. Victim of hysterical job fear, he or she will continue to wait, without pay, lest some other “fellow worker” grab off the work or the stock while he or she is gone. Then, when the job does come, they go to it at full steam, to make up with a premium for the time lost in this watchful waiting. “Dog eat dog” is the motto that should hang high over the big electric sign of the G. E., which shines out every night over the backwaters of Boston Bay.

Catch No. 4

Once a point price is set, the bunk boys of the company inform us, there is no change in that price, no matter how much the workers may earn under it. “Speed up,” say they in effect to the hard-pressed near-neurotics in the works, “and we will not penalize you for it by reducing prices.” That is Catch No. 4, say we. And why? Because prices are continually changing, are continually being reduced. Needless to say, the company has a fine alibi for this. The guarantee that prices will not be lowered or amended in any way is always limited by the reservation: “unless there is some change in the drawings, specifications, etc.” In most cases, the workers do not or will not see this catch, and off they go, pell-mell, beating each other's records. Until one fine morning, the drawings, specifications, etc., have been changed. And down go the prices.

Let us see how this works out in detail. A group of workers, we will say, continue to earn on a given operation 10 to 20 per cent over their base rate, as a premium for their increased production. The company sees that that will never, never do! Its engineering department, conspiring with the piece work department, hits upon the idea of changing the serial number of the drawings or specifications, or of making some slight change in the operation. A new price is then set below the old price, so as to eat up the premium formerly earned. The worker who has earned a premium on the old price dare not go below his old speed, or he would be accused of “laying down”, which is a most serious offence at the G. E. In order to try to recapture his old premium, he must speed up all the faster—a new and more difficult standard having now been set for him. The workers are much in the position of the man or the horse, running on a revolving tread mill. They are going mighty fast, but are getting nowhere.

Sometimes, of course, the “experts” cannot consistently change the drawings, specifications or operations. That pleases them not a bit. Then, the claim is set up that the price was merely a temporary one, while the job was being developed. Or, the job is moved to another plant of the company, where a new group of workers are put

on it and a new price established. As the workers are not organized and have no organized communication with each other, between plant and plant, they have no means of preventing themselves from being used against each other. Often, they are ignorant of the little trick that is put over on them—to give the tactics of the G. E. their correct term.

The outcome of all this is the natural one. As Mr. Charles D. Keaveney of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, who has collaborated with me on this piece-work study, says: "The ever increasing speed-up of production has been responsible for thousands being out of work in the G. E. plants and most of the others being on a part-time basis." "Production," say we, "what crimes have been committed in thy name!"

Committeemen Refuse to Answer

It will be interesting to note what answer the G. E. will attempt to make on these speed-up charges. Up to the present, they have not dared to answer my other allegations. That is strange, indeed, when it is recalled that Propaganda is the company's middle name. It would be erroneous to suppose that they have not tried to answer. When the first article in this series appeared, Mr. Darling called the committeemen of the plant together and requested them to answer me. He suggested that the publication *LIBERTY* might be the best medium for a reply—"as it reaches such a wide group of wage earners." But the committeemen refused to reply. Many of them, if they but dared, would tell Mr. Darling what they really think of his scheme, as they have told me. At least, he should be grateful to me for giving him a few facts about their thoughts that he may not have known. If he but only knew the full sources of my information, then might he be happy. Fortunately or unfortunately, that he will never know.

Certainly, the bunk boys of the West Lynn plants must know, vaguely, of the trend of thought among the workers. Speed-up such as theirs never made for contentment. To divert the workers' minds, they have hit on the widely used stunt of namby-pamby amusements, under the auspices of the company. The fourth annual dance of the General Electric Employees Athletic Association was held recently in Odd Fellows Hall, in Lynn. Miss Blanche Ethel Woods, of Building 32, River Works, was there chosen as "Miss General Electric" for the year 1927. This makes her "the most attractive girl in the Lynn plants" and she gets a handsome sterling silver toilet set for her charms. The "famous Gridiron Club dinners at Washington" are duplicated by the mid-winter frolic of the Spark Plug Associates. Parties for different sections are encouraged and assisted by the company. The story of births, deaths, and general gossip is contained in the *LYNN WORKS NEWS*, to which reference has been made, under the able editorship of George B. Grant, a professional newspaper man. No expense is spared by the company to befuddle the workers.

That the spirit of Old Tyrannicus still hovers over the

works is seen by his appearance at the 25th annual celebration of the apprenticeship school. As the founder of the school, Mr. Fish was on deck. This man, whose die-hard attitude led to his being publicly hissed by his men and women workers at the hearings in 1918, was the guest of honor on this occasion. Most rightly so; for Mr. Darling is but another Fish with a splendid coat of veneer. "Horses, horses, horses", is Mr. Darling's favorite hymn, in effect, as he cracks the speed-up whip—and means: "We are driving Men, Men, Men".

We think it should be made perfectly clear at this point that this series of articles is not a general attack on the men serving on the plant committees as representatives of the employees. Some of them, we know, are merely "plant politicians," eager to hold on to their committee jobs at any cost, as it is an easy road to management's favor. These few hope to be continued on the payrolls when slack time comes, etc., as a reward for their services to the management. Many of the committeemen, however, are attempting conscientiously to serve the men and women of the plant. They are simply the victims of a vicious system. Their position is a hopeless one, as one of them frankly told me. When we produce the records of certain friends of the company among the men hereafter, it will be merely to advise the workers of the truth concerning these gentlemen. Those who have not played square with the workers in the past, or are not doing so in the present, can scarcely expect other treatment. It is impossible to serve two masters. Those who are serving the company cannot look forward to being handled with kid gloves when they pose as friends and representatives of the workers.

Mr. Darling's plan to cover up the real effects of the company union with a "goody-goody" sugar coat, it may be added, is suffering from severe handicaps here and there. The chief of these is the continued cantankerous conduct of Superintendent Frank P. Cox, of the Federal Street establishment. Mr. Cox is a hang-over from the old Fish school of hard-boiled executives. He is the man, it will be recalled, who attacked Wright Greggson so strenuously for standing up conscientiously for the workers. He is the gentleman, we understand, who attempted to persuade Mr. Darling to have the articles run attacking this investigation. The fruits of his policy at the present hour are seen in the intense unrest in his own particular plant—the "West Lynn" plant proper. The opinion which his workers hold of him is summed up in the appellation, "Bulldog," by which he is affectionately known among them. The confidence in the plan of representation has reached such a low ebb in Cox's section that it has become most difficult to persuade workers to take the jobs of committeemen in many departments of that section. The workers describe Mr. Cox as "a combination of the Kaiser and Czar, rolled into one." We believe that he is serving to expose the camouflage of the company union better than any other one man in or about the works.

HISTORICAL NOTE ON TYRANNICUS FISH

IN justice to Mr. Fish, we wish to state that the rumor among a few of the men that he was let out for pro-Germanism is undoubtedly unfounded. They have confused him with one of his right-hand men, largely responsible for his Prussian policy, and whom a great number of the workers credit with being pro-German. Mr. Fish was retired from the General Managership because he was not equipped mentally or temperamentally, to veneer his wares. That task was left to more gentlemanly gentlemen—Messrs. Rice and Darling.

Winning Workingwomen to Unionism

Not An Impossible Task

By FANNIA M. COHN

CAN women be organized? Does not their temporary character as workers make that impossible? Have we developed any technique that promises success? I have been hearing questions like these for too many years. I'm getting tired of them. They lead nowhere. Today, when we recognize the value of experimentation in the social as well as the physical sciences, they seem particularly abstract. If we want to know whether women can be organized, and what technique is most effective to that end, we must attempt organization. Only after we have tried out a number of techniques, will we be able to decide whether the job can be done and how best to do it.

At best organization is a difficult task. The American labor movement has made strenuous efforts in that direction for sixty years and even today has organized only about 4,000,000 of the more than 17,000,000 men and women in industry. Yet we have never been discouraged in our task—never stopped to ask—"Can men be organized?"

From the earliest days, the problem of working women has been regarded as a particularly different one because of "feminine character." Women were *different* with mystical sex traits which made it impossible to reach them. Their psychology was not like men's; they did not want what men wanted, nor act as men did.

Fortunately, all that is changing. We are coming to see that women are human beings—with the same likes and dislikes, the same capacity for love and hatred as men possess. Their passions and desires, we see respond to stimuli very like those which appeal so strongly to men. With only minor variations, women desire of life what men desire, and they come to resemble each other more closely in their ways of thinking.

Recognizing this, we must look for an explanation of our past difficulties in organizing workingwomen in something other than their femininity. We find it first of all in their character as workers—they are young, in unskilled industries largely, and consequently poorly paid. Everywhere, among both men and women—the semi-skilled, the poorly paid and the young are not easy to organize.

Nevertheless in those organized industries where the conditions of the workingman depend upon those of the workingwoman—those industries where women are employed in great numbers, such as the garment industries—the unions have succeeded in organizing women as well as men.

According to Mr. Charles D. Keaveney of the Electrical Workers' Union who organized the West Lynn plant of the General Electric Company in the 1918 strike, for instance, among the 12,000 workers participating about 40 per cent were women. "The women were a big asset," he says, "and did wonderful work during the strike."

That is true, too, in the textile industry. In every

strike women have gone out with the men, and displayed a courage and willingness to suffer for the formation of a union in strength second to none. They have a particular difficult problem here, for many of them are married, and besides working must care for a home and look after a few children. Yet they have always fought valiantly and everywhere disproved the assertion that mothers' devotion to their children will outweigh loyalty to the union.

We have examples of industries organized where women were not only present in large numbers but actually were in the majority. Here workingwomen have stopped work when their union was refused recognition, have carried on protracted and intense strikes, have stood all the suffering connected with such struggles. But more important, after the victory they have succeeded in retaining their union in a fighting condition as a proper instrument for their protection. Such effective organization has been achieved in many locals of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and the United Textile Workers. Local 33 of the United Textile Workers, at Salem, Mass., for instance, is composed chiefly of young women, and despite the doubts of many as to the possibility of maintaining it, has existed without interruption for eight years.

Here, despite the fact that the turnover in a union composed of young women is enormous, the permanence of the union has not been affected. The workingwomen have succeeded as have men in other industries in building up permanent working organizations with treasuries and officers and steadily improving conditions. They have accumulated experience and developed traditions, principles and policies strong enough to set their stamp on the workers continually entering the industry, so that the newcomers will stand for these established principles and be governed by these ideals. Gradually, indeed, workingwomen in many industries have developed a collective sense of responsibility and deep concern for all their fellow workers which persists after any single worker leaves.

Our failure to organize women in the past has had two other causes. First, our doubt as to its possibility has decreased the confidence of the women workers in their own abilities, and made it harder for them to solve their problems. This attitude is, fortunately, passing, as more men have the opportunity to see the courage and loyalty of their sisters in strikes, their willingness to fight and suffer in the battle of labor.

More important has been our failure to develop a proper approach to the workingwoman. For while it is true that her desires are like her brother's, it is, none the less true, that she differs from him in her attitude towards the solution of a problem.

It is not easy for one who recognizes the difficulties in the path of any organizer to hand out suggestions for

doing it, to state definitely what method will achieve results. There are too many elements involved in organization campaigns—human as well as industrial. We must keep in mind the character of the group—its racial and social background; the locality where the organization campaign is planned—its tradition, its code of ethics, its conception of proper modes of feminine conduct. No organizer will begin a campaign before such a study is completed. In the organization of workingwomen, as in the case of organizing men, other facts must also be taken into consideration—their character, their ideals, what inspires them, what appeals to their emotions and imaginations.

One problem which the organizer of workingwomen will face in a constantly decreasing measure, is the tradition of individualism among them. Their tendency to rely on individualistic methods for securing advantages is passing. The development of our social and economic life, which threw together millions of women in mills, factories, immense department stores and offices is creating in women a broader social outlook.

In the past, even the struggles for the fundamental rights of all women, were carried on by a few ardent pioneers, whose vision helped them to understand the need and whose personality and will power swept other women into the fight with them. But their activities changed the state of affairs. They created the group and today in every social institution, but particularly in the trade union, women must work in groups to be permanently effective—delegating their power to such of their numbers as can carry out their collective interests and defend their wishes.

In the development of such groups, workingwomen already trade unionists, will have to play a leading role. They must recognize their responsibility to their sisters in other industries and through their trade unions demand that the labor movement as a whole undertake the organization of women workers.

The question often arises, then, as to whether men or women should carry on the organization campaigns. There can be no answer to this question. No hard and fast rules can determine who will be the most successful in a particular case because of the many elements which must be taken into account. My own opinion is that both men and women can be useful in the organization of women. Each has something to contribute. We would not deny men's experience in organization; but we should not, on the other hand, pass over women's abilities for that task. Women's endurance, devotion to and enthusiasm for a cause, as well as their knowledge of the characteristics of their sex, cannot be disputed.

But besides this, there is the moral effect on a group of workingwomen of an intelligent capable woman organizer. I wonder how many people realize how women are stimulated by an encouraging message brought to them by another woman worker who appeals to their courage, their sense of solidarity, their responsibility to their fellow workers. She stands before them as a living proof that a woman with ability has an opportunity in the trade union movement for development and self-expression as well as for the service and leadership of her fellow workers in their progress towards a better life. The presence of a woman organizer, more than anything

else, can help to overcome that lack of confidence in their ability from which women suffer more than from a lack of ability.

In these organization campaigns whether carried on by men or women, there is reason to believe that one appeal can be made successfully—the appeal to the desire for power. In their struggles for better working conditions and the right to shape their own lives—economically and industrially, workingmen, forced to fight against powerful opposing interests, which enlist against the workers every respectable social institution—the police, the courts, the institutions of learning, the press—learned to appreciate power. Without it, they saw, they were helpless; with it, they might be masters of their own lives. Since they could hope for power only through their trade union this recognition of its importance stimulated trade union growth.

What men have learned from experience women might well learn more rapidly. They would not have to go through every phase of the struggle, to come to appreciate the importance of power or the possibility of achieving it through their trade unions. And such an appreciation would go far towards building up and maintaining effective unions among them.

A somewhat similar appeal to the desire for approval might well be made. Women respect their fathers, brothers and sweethearts for their struggles and their successful efforts to organize unions as defenses on the social and industrial field. They can be shown that in an exactly similar way they will gain more respect from their fathers, their brothers and their sweethearts, if they, too, stand for their rights as workingwomen, insist on better conditions, on more leisure and on their right to have a voice in the determination of the conditions under which they work.

To such women as plead a lack of interest in unionization because they expect to remain in industry only temporarily an appeal to self interest in addition to these other appeals may be useful. These women can be made to realize that, although they remain in industry only temporarily, they, nevertheless, create a permanent labor force which competes with masculine labor and forces down men's wages. Their labor affects their fathers', their brothers', perhaps their future husbands' earnings and thus brings the labor problem home again.

But to succeed in our campaign, we shall have to make as determined an effort as we have made with workingmen. We shall have to convince workingwomen first that their conditions should be bettered. This task should not be so difficult for women's desires for the good things of life are not less than men's and they will admit at once as men did that their lives could be well enriched. We shall then have to convince them that conditions *can* be bettered. That task, too, can be accomplished if we develop the proper approach. One who realizes the complexity of the task will not suggest any one best approach. An open mind is desirable, a willingness to test each way to find the best. But such experimental methods should be successful. Wherever women have been organized—and their numbers increase from year to year, they prove the possibility of organization if by careful testing the best way for that specific case is found.

The Drama of American History

A New Series of "Brookwood Pages"

By ARTHUR W. CALHOUN

V. Battling for Mastery

The Declaration of Independence had talked about "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Such an ideal was the sort that some one is pretty sure to take seriously, and indeed there were in the young nation at least three groups that took the Declaration seriously. The plantation slave masters were sure that they were the ones that were to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The capitalists thought that they were the chosen people. Likewise some of the common men,—pioneers, farmers, industrial workers—were of the opinion that to them belonged the glowing promises. Consequently there was a battle on for opportunity and power.

At first the new national government fell into the hands of the capitalist group, for they were keen and compact enough to be able to score the victory at the outset. The mass of the economic life of the country was, however, still in the hands of the farmers and small business interests, so they were able to rally by 1800 and inaugurate the rule of Jeffersonian democracy. The big capitalists would have to bide their time.

Jeffersonian democracy, and its successor the democracy of Andrew Jackson, suited the bulk of the people well enough, but twenty-five years of this brand of freedom left the wage-workers about where they started. The second quarter of the nineteenth century found the workers for wages no richer and very little freer than they were in 1776. Fifty years of American independence had brought no gain to Labor, unless the extension of suffrage in some of the states is to be counted a gain. Even that would hardly have come had it not been for the influence of the frontier, where anybody with an axe and a rifle was about as good as anybody else. That equalizing influence, together with rival factions' desire for votes, was responsible for the conferring of suffrage on the northern workers.

Thus by 1825 there were large numbers of workers with the right to vote and with very little else. For forty years there had been scattered efforts at unionism, and some gains had been made here and there; but the masters developed the unpleasant habit of prosecuting the workers for conspiracy, and the judges, in spite of Democratic protest, insisted on applying against the workers the English common law. Thus not merely the employer but the government were clearly against the claims of labor.

The consequence was a great outburst of Labor politics, with Workingmen's Parties at work in many states, and with local victories in Philadelphia, New York, and other cities. There was even talk of a national Labor Party; but, after all, the demands made by the workers were not so much real labor demands as civic reform demands, for public schools, for abolition of imprisonment for debt, for regulation of banks and monopolies,

and the like. They were the sort of demands that any intelligent and honorable citizen could support. Consequently the important issues were taken up by the old parties and ultimately enacted into law. Thus the position of the Labor parties was undermined, and this fact, together with their inexperience and incompetence at the game of politics put them out of business. There was little room for a Labor Party anyway, for the Democratic Party in the Jacksonian period (1825-1840) was nearer to being a Labor Party than any major party has ever again been.

Unable thus to seize political power, and dissatisfied with the futile efforts of Utopian dreamers to reform the world, Labor fell back on trade union efforts, and in the years just before the civil war succeeded in laying, in certain trades, the foundation for the type of unionism that has been typical in recent years. Labor had not set itself off as a distinct class. In the main it was content to wage civic battles along with other good citizens or to create business-like union machinery for direct material gains.

Thus the main battle for mastery was between the northern capitalists and the southern slave lords. Through most of the period before the Civil War, the former had to reconcile themselves to the fact that the plantation interests had the upper hand in national politics. The slave owners ran the national government, even to the extent of plunging it into a private imperialistic war with Mexico for their own selfish advantage. By the Mexican War (1846-8) Mexico was stripped of half her territory with a view to the making of slave states under the Stars and Stripes. Abraham Lincoln, then in congress, opposed the war. U. S. Grant, who took part in it as a young officer, later looked back on the exploit and declared it the most unjust war ever waged by a strong nation against a weaker one. Such, however, was the price of power. Such was the effort of the waning slave system to give itself a new lease of life by laying hold on virgin soil to replace the barren earth exhausted by the clumsy and inefficient chattel system.

The fact of the matter was that the up-and-coming capitalist industrialism of the North was proving far more competent and profitable than the cruder slavery of the South. Population in the North multiplied by leaps and bounds to correspond with the increasing productivity of capitalist industry, while the population of the South lagged at the point warranted by the feeble yield of the slave plantation system. Likewise the material wealth of the North piled up miraculously while the South stumbled along, poor and virtually insolvent. Any thinking man could have told that the North was sure to triumph,—that Capitalism would be certain to take the national government out of the hands of southern gentlemen; but it took a long while for the idea to penetrate the aristocratic brains of the plantation lords. Their life taught them to rhapsodize rather than to cal-

culate. Hence they were willing to risk a war in which defeat was certain,—unless their control of the cotton supply could be used to bring France and England into the picture on their side.

When the break came, however, it was not over any idealistic or moral issue. Efforts of self-sacrificing devotees of freedom to arouse the conscience of the nation against slavery had proved unavailing. Even Labor did not have a united judgment on the merits of the case. If some workers hated and fought chattel slavery in order to clear the ground for the more important battle against wage slavery, other workers failed to see why they should attack the plantation owners, who on occasion supported their demands against the northern employers. In any case, far-seeing workers might wonder whether they should help to set free the slaves in order that these might come north and compete for jobs, as negroes had already competed in New York City. As for the ruling classes of the North, they had nothing against slavery. They could not very well answer the southern charge that the wage system of the North was just as real and just as heartless slavery as any.

So it was left for the pioneersmen to force the issue. Unless the slave system could get new lands to the West to replace its own exhausted soil, it would have to shrivel and die. But these western acres were wanted by the small farmers and their sons and by the westward-pushing groups of workers from the East. Consequently it was possible to organize the Republican Party to stand for the retention of the West for free homesteads. The new party was a party of politicians and not of idealists. It had no desire to stand for freedom as such; but its claim to the West sounded the death knell of chattel slavery and the slave lords went to war.

Four years of slaughter settled what might as well have been recognized in advance,—that chattel agriculture does not develop the man-power, the executive ability, and the material resources with which to defeat industrial capitalism. But the war period did more than that. It provided a smoke screen under which Big Business was able to take over completely the national Republican machine and to entrench itself unshakeably in power. While the hearts of the nation were wrung with grief and dismay, the representatives of capitalist interests managed to put through deals that clinched their claims to vast resources, and they created a psychology of sectionalism that made it impossible for a generation to think of uniting the country against them.

Thus the Civil War meant the ruin of the system for which Lincoln stood. He was no idealist. He was a shrewd politician, the strategic representative of an economic cause. He stood for the system of the middle class; the system under which the boy might expect to be apprentice today, journeyman tomorrow, employer next week. His aim was to help the man that was on the make. In order to achieve this end, the reactionary power of the slave lords had to be brushed aside, and Lincoln managed this job, only to find one set of vested interests being replaced by another,—the country still enslaved. Thus was the swelling capitalism of the sixties able to focus to its own ends the currents of idealism, of labor hopes, of pioneers' dreamings, of middle class ambitions, so that the Civil War ended with Big Business in the saddle, as its forerunner had been under Washing-

THE MASTERS TODAY

IN this article by Brother Calhoun it is said, and rightly: "The Civil War ended with Big Business in the saddle." From that day to this it has strengthened itself in the place of power—seating itself where the Slave Power sat before.

Proofs of this are all around. And one smashing proof comes to us from New England, as this issue goes to press. Local No. 380 of the Milks Drivers and Creamery Workers Union went on strike last summer against the onslaught of the Alden Brothers Company. This concern had consolidated with two other firms—Childs Brothers Company and the Noble and Sons Company—into the so-called New England Creamery Products Company. These two latter companies had always been "open shop," but Alden Brothers had had a union shop.

Faced by a powerful, united corporation—what could the union do but advertise that the product was unfair and to notify the union world what firms were still fair to the labor cause? That they did, and now a so-called court in equity declares the union must pay damages of \$61,971 for striking "illegally."

The "upright" judge was not content with granting damages to cover the hiring of police and detectives by the companies. He further assessed the union for "preventing" folks—"by threats and intimidation,"—the old, old words—from buying the New England products.

We ask you, brothers: "Whose Judge is this Judge Morton, anyway?" Have you ever heard him, or any other court, hail Big Business-employers before them for defrauding their laborers of their wages—by cutting these wages to the bone, so that big and menacing profits might result? Good God, No! Judges don't do that. They realize who their masters are. They are the fawning courtiers of Big Business.

To the workers we repeat: If you mean to be free-men, put your property in your wives' names, and protect your families in that way from these judicial vultures. Then, go out and raise hell, intelligently—showing the courts by your mass action of aggressive non-resistance that their usurped power is but a piece of tinsel which can be torn into rags.

ton before 1800. The difference was that now at last the larger capitalism had definitely achieved a party that could permanently prevail, and that because the larger capitalism now represented the strategic elements in the economic system. The middle class might squirm for a generation longer, but its interests were too petty, too dwindling to avail. Labor might writhe and rage, but its hour was not yet. Things were in the saddle and they ruled mankind. This, and not the assassin's bullet, was Lincoln's martyrdom. This was the ante-chamber to Coolidge, to Mellon, and Doheny and Fall. This was the betrayal of the hopes that the world had placed in America,—the inevitable betrayal of misguided hopes. The way to the ideal commonwealth lay still through the Mountains of the Giants with Castles of Despair.

HOW TO OBTAIN LOCAL PUBLICITY

What Is News?

IT is a fact which cannot be contradicted that many newspapermen do not realize the value of labor's actions and statements as "news." It is the job of the labor publicity representative, in many instances, to show them the value of labor's activities—by personally keeping up the contact with the news men, and pointing out the worthwhileness of this story and that.

It is a further very evident fact, however, that labor men themselves do not know the newspaperman's game or his viewpoint, and very often do not know what "news" is. They do not prepare their matter in news release form, nor give it the proper twist that will make it acceptable at the city desk.

"News" of the sort we wish to create must be largely based on action. When a representative of the Open Shoppers comes into town, and at a meeting or banquet attacks the union movement, it is almost impossible to get an answer into the papers in the form of a statement. The best way to proceed is to have a meeting of your body. There, a speaker—from out of town, if possible, as that adds to the news value in many instances—can deliver the answer in an address to the central body. Thereafter, the speech can be released in proper form for the next day's papers.

"News" also must be live. If a judge assaults a labor union as did the worthy Judge Morton in Boston, the answer to that gentleman should be delivered as soon as possible, in as many places as possible. Of course, the exact facts must be known, and that takes time. But we have devised our Service Bureau for the unions, just for that purpose. If you want information in a hurry, write or wire us and we will deliver the goods!

Further, if you wish to lay the proper foundation for local newspaper publicity, it is highly desirable in the beginning to secure a sympathetic newspaperman, to be on the job with the local labor representatives for several weeks. This requires an outlay of money, but it pays in the long run. Again we are ready to assist in this direction—as we have a staff of friendly newspaper men within call, who will do the job on a non-profitmaking basis, for the necessary salaries and costs to them.

If this is impossible, we shall be glad to cooperate, at any rate, at long range. An example of how this can be done is furnished by the recent attack on labor unions made by Msgr. Belford, of Brooklyn, before the Manufacturers Association in Hartford, Conn. Brother Thomas A. Sweeney, of that city, immediately got in touch with us, and we prepared a reply, which got into the "letters" column of the paper. We did not expect any more than that, as there was no action in a mere statement. However, we got an immediate answer printed—now to be followed up by the necessary "action".

WITHDRAW THE MARINES!

They Must Come Out of Nicaragua Immediately

NO man who believes in freedom and has his wits about him can defend much of the legislation in Mexico, restricting religious liberty. For Labor, it is not a question of the Catholic Church. The entire principle of voluntary association is at stake. A government that can crush religious organizations can likewise, by the same token, crush out trade unions, when it has a mind to do so. It was the same Bismark who instituted the "Kultur-kampf" against the Catholics who created the obnoxious anti-Socialist laws of Prussia. No state has the moral right to stamp out voluntary associations, and never will have that right. We would not even recommend such legislation for the Ku Klux Klan, despite its ill effects on Labor and despite its many sordid and morbid by-products.

But—and that is a question fit for pausing over, long and thoroughly—is this a reason for war on our Latin-American neighbors? It is **Not**. The Kellogg-Coolidge Gang of Imperialists state explicitly that it is not. Every group in this country—reactionary, conservative, liberal and radical—agree that it is not. Then, by the shades of Thomas Jefferson and his Bill of Rights, why are we preparing for war over a matter of much less concern—Oil? That we are so preparing, every well-advised man knows. Reservists in some numbers, at least, have been requested to be "ready". The marines in Nicaragua swagger up and down the country, with the natives grovelling before them, declaring neutral zones wherever the Sacasa government happens to win. They are there, as our Government has openly confessed as a threat at Mexico.

As Edo Fimmen, Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Union, well says in the British "New Leader":

"Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 lays it down that 'Lands and waters included within the limits of the national territory belong originally to the nation, which may transfer its ownership to individuals.'

"All the trouble the Mexican nation is experiencing today arises out of the fact that the present Government of President Plutarco Elias Calles, which succeeded the Obregon Government, is trying to enforce this article, instead of relegating it to the oblivion which has been the fate of so many excellent Mexican laws in the past. The Government is trying to restore to its original owners—the Indian peasants—the lands which has been taken away from them in the course of centuries—some of it as recently as the end of the last century.

There is but one honorable way for the United States to act. That is by the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the marines from Latin-America.

Following the Fight

With Comment Thereon

By THE MANAGING EDITOR

OUR AIM:

To Educate the Unorganized—To Stimulate the Organized—
To Unity, Militancy and Intelligent Action.

A WINNING PROGRAM

Hosiery Workers and Boston Building Trades

ALL things are said to come to him who waits. We have our own serious doubt about that. Waiting alone, it is most certain, is a fatal policy. Something may turn up, and then it may not.

Union labor can get nowhere by merely waiting. It must charge ahead. must make progress, or it will make regress. "Going fishing" will not organize anything or anybody.

We are happy to report encouraging recognition of this in many quarters. It is inspiring, indeed, to witness the thorough and intelligent manner in which the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, affiliated with the United Textile Workers, have sized up the job before them and proceeded to tackle it.

A well established union in Philadelphia, Providence and other points, they might have decided to be satisfied. Whistling to keep up optimism, they might have allowed the future to slip from their grasp. They did nothing of the kind. They took those steps in time which prevent nine times the effort, after anti-union employerdom has gotten the drop on you.

Their program in a nutshell runs something like this:

1. **EDUCATION OF THEMSELVES.**—By securing the services of The LABOR BUREAU, Inc., to survey their industry and discover its needs and the financial and other conditions of the non-union employers. Also by taking advantage of Brookwood's Textile Institute.

2. **EDUCATION OF THE UNORGANIZED.**—By establishing a labor radio in the city of Reading—a large non-union center—and broadcasting the message of unionism to the workers in their homes. So effective has this effort been that the anti-union forces have sought to suppress the radio.

3. **EDUCATION OF THE "PUBLIC."**—By following the LABOR AGE idea of securing intimate facts on the woeful situation in the non-union field and disseminating these facts in publicity, wherever possible, and wherever "impossible," likewise. This, as the basis for organization activities.

4. **EDUCATION OF THE EMPLOYERS.**—By getting them to get together and insisting that any "standardization" of the industry shall be a "standardization" upward in lowly paid and bad-conditioned spots, rather than downward in the unionized strongholds.

5. **EDUCATION, RIGHT AT THE MILL GATES.**—By keeping organizers well equipped with the facts, ceaselessly at work in the non-union centers. There will be no let-up until Unionism has won.

There, brothers, you have a program that will make the Full Fashioned Hosiery industry union from now till Doomsday, if it is persistently and intelligently pursued. All labor should offer congratulations to Secretary William Smith of the Federation, President Gus Geiges, of the largest local, and the other members of their executive board—for not knowing the word "can't" and going ahead to do the job that can always be done.

As though in further answer to our wishes, the Associated Building Trades of Boston have wisely launched upon a similar winning program. They have employed the LABOR BUREAU for the same sort of survey, as that carried out for the Hosiery workers. They intend to model their subsequent activities on what that survey discloses. They intend to meet the counter-propaganda of anti-union forces by publicity of their own—of the facts. Secretary E. A. Johnson and the other officers of that body have shown the way to effective action in the field before us.

We recommend steps of this nature to every union in the country—whether it be at present on the top of the wave or at the bottom of the trough. There is no other way to be assured of permanent success. We note, for example, for the building trades, that one of the largest firms financing such operations had advised contractors not to erect hotels, apartments or other large structures for at least six months. And it reports that in some twenty cities no such permits were asked for in the month of February. That sort of propaganda and action must be faced by the unions immediately—along with the other problems which may come up.

LABOR AGE

FAST-FISH AND LOOSE FISH

Or: Rewards of Waste and Idleness

BACK in the good old days, when the Nantucket whalesman sailed all the seven seas for the precious whale, sole supply of oil for America's lamps, an unwritten law ruled the ocean empire concerning right to possession of the whale.

In his magical book, *MOBY DICK*, Herman Melville has stated this simple law:

"I. Fast Fish belongs to the party fast to it.

"II. A Loose Fish is fair game for anybody who can soonest catch it."

Alive or dead, a fish was "fast" when it was either connected with the whale boat in some way, or had a certain mark of possession attached to it. This mark of possession was termed the "waif".

To which Melville adds the thought that many of us are Fast Fish and Loose Fish, too—attached to some overlord or fair game for his catching. "What are the sinews and souls," asks he, "of Russian serfs and Republican slaves but Fast-Fish, whereof possession is the whole of the Law?"

What are the sinews and souls of many American workmen, we may suggest for today, but Fast-Fish, to the Interests which use them and abuse them, and feed their minds with Interest-produced ideas?

As to the fate of these Fast Fish, we choose to call attention to three pertinent current facts:

1. While railroad workers of the country—according to October wage reports—made an average of \$141 per month, and while the whole weekly wage for all workers continues around \$25 or less, the possessors of these Fast Fish report the following profits for 1926, according to the *WALL STREET JOURNAL*:

	1925	1926
Gen. Motors	\$116,016,000	\$183,674,000
Am. Telephone	129,036,000	136,225,000
U. S. Steel	117,712,000	138,530,000
Texas Co. (oil)	39,605,000	38,150,000
Gen. Electric	40,567,000	44,114,000
Woolworth	24,602,000	26,050,000
Sears-Roebuck	20,975,000	21,000,000
Am. Tobacco	22,289,000	23,000,000
Allied Chem.	20,567,000	22,350,000
Intl. Harvester	19,171,000	22,365,000
Western Union	17,523,000	17,300,000
Am. Smelting	17,279,000	18,890,000
Am. Can	16,390,000	14,650,000
Mack Trucks	9,468,000	7,910,000
Famous-Players	5,718,000	6,390,000
Am. Locomotive	843,000*	7,540,000
U. S. Rubber	23,519,000	15,339,000
Am. Sugar	6,467,000	7,650,000
Remington Type.	2,370,000	2,560,000

*Deficit

\$654,595,000 \$760,587,000

Of which Leland Olds, economic editor of the *Federated Press*, remarks: "If the owners had been satisfied with a repetition of the generous profits of 1925, the balance of the 1926 profits would have provided a 10 per cent increase in wages for 1,000,000 factory workers."

2. At the same time, we learn from the address of

Arthur E. Foote of the United States Department of Commerce, at Atlantic City on February 25, that these gentlemen making these great profits are responsible for billions of dollars in waste. Waste in six major industries runs as high as 49 per cent, he stated; of which management is responsible for more than 50 per cent, and labor for less than 25 per cent. The percentage of waste in each industry studied by the government runs thus: Metal trades, 29 per cent; boot and shoes manufacturing, 41 per cent; textile manufacturing, 49 per cent; building, 53 per cent; printing, 58 per cent; men's clothing, 64 per cent.

3. The report of the U. S. Commissioner of Internal Revenue for 1924, on rich folks who died in 1924, shows that by far the most popular occupation among millionaires was no occupation at all. Of the 244 millionaires who shuffled off this mortal coil in that year, 76 actually did nothing, 44 were retired and 45 were corporation officials.

Such are the rewards of Idleness and Waste, at the present day and hour. The Fast-Fish worker increases his production only to see the increase go into the corporations' profits, not into his pay envelope. There is no remedy under the sun for that but for the Fast-Fish to become free—and industrial action through unionism is the sword that will cut the golden rope that binds him.

SUGGESTING A HOUSE-CLEANING

Inefficiency, not Labor Laws, Hurt Textiles

WISDOM may have built herself a house, as sayeth King Solomon. But it wasn't a textile mill. Stupidity and textile manufacturing, in many instances, seem to be inevitably interlinked.

Indicated as inefficient and wasteful by the United States Department of Commerce—a body not yet accused of radicalism!—the textile managers and owners nevertheless continue their whine before the Massachusetts legislature for a modification of the women's 48-hour law. Mr. Ward Thoron and others of his kind dub the working by women of only 48 hours per week as a "textile menace". It is not of themselves they are thinking. It is with their employees' welfare that they are concerned!

We must believe that these worthy gentlemen know that the "public" and even legislators can look beyond their noses. Maine is not so far from Massachusetts. It has a 54-hour law. And yet, in that snow-bound and ingrown state textiles are in as bad, and perhaps a worse, shape than in Massachusetts.

In Lowell, during this past month, we hear Mr. Archibald Grant, executive secretary of the Lowell Chamber of Commerce, stating that conditions in the mills have improved greatly of late. "Practically every business man in Lowell," he states, "now believes that the corner has been turned." Much of this improvement, if such it be, comes we learn from new advertising methods and a new form of pep in the hitherto decrepit management.

Can we believe our eyes in reading this report? Can it be possible that any improvement in textile mill business can come from a state "burdened" with a 48-hour law? And yet, here it is before us, in black and white.

If the brain-power of these gentlemen were not so far petrified by the attempt to take their own inefficiency out

of the hides of the workers, they would comprehend that a shortened work-week must make for improved industrial conditions. We find almost everywhere that the shortened work-week has been introduced, that the manufacturers have been stimulated to the introduction of modern machinery, to the thinking through of their own problems much more carefully, to a revival of their "individual initiative", of which they prate so much. You can look at our foreign pages this month, and behold that very effect upon the industries of New South Wales, Australia.

In textiles we see eloquent proof of that in the Naumkeag Mill at Salem. With the 48-hour week and with other labor "handicaps", this mill by sheer efficiency of management has made more money per spindle during the past year than any other textile sheeting mill. The AMERICAN WOOL AND COTTON REPORTER, organ of the manufacturers, is our authority for that.

The great error of these folks is that they have suffered from the mental degeneration which creeps into many old families, and is showing itself alarmingly in the pure Anglo-Saxon strain in this country. Their attitude is well-shown in the announcement on March 2nd by the American Woolen Company that it had an operating loss of \$2,000,000 in 1926; but would, just the same, vote the usual dividends to stockholders. We have to go back to Robert Owen and his day to discover a textile concern deciding to keep up wages and employment, in the face of no business. They simply do not do that. Dividends they will pay, if at all possible, no matter what ill wind blows. Wages must come down at the first sign of foul weather.

We suggest for the industry, so evidently decayed, a cleaning out of its management personnel in many instances, as a prelude to progress.

"COFFIN" IS RIGHT

G. E.'s Award for Speeding Up

YOU will be duly delighted. Already your pulse must beat a little faster at the magnificent generosity of the General Electric Company.

It is all set down in the WALL STREET JOURNAL of March 5th. Twenty-seven employees of the corporation have been given four shares of stock each, together with certificates (of loyal conduct), in the fourth annual award by the Charles A. Coffin Foundation. All of which is "in recognition of outstanding services performed by them during 1926." The decision as to the fortunate ones was made by Gerald Swope, president of the company.

We read:

"Outstanding among the awards was that given Miss Florence Kuhn, the only woman to be honored this year and the second rewarded in the history of the Foundation. She has been in the employ of the company less than two years as a machine operator at the Decatur, Ill., plant. This was her first factory experience. Some time ago she was called upon to substitute for another girl employe who was ill. This work was different from what she had been doing and she could not keep up the pace set by the other girls. Instead of becoming discouraged and asking that she be transferred back to her old position, she studied the process of this work, which was on arma-

OIL WORKERS "REWARDED"

CAN it be that it has come to this? Are the forecasts that we have made, concerning what will happen to the bamboozled toilers in the basic industries, about to be confirmed?

So, indeed, it seems. The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey has just thrown terror into the ranks of its men, by announcing that on and after April first, a large part of its refinery at Bayway, near Elizabeth, will be closed. And the plea for such drastic action? That the men have over-produced!

Manager J. R. Carrington of that refinery, states "that the increase in daily crude production" resulted in "a surplus of approximately 500,000 barrels per day more than a year ago." He makes the usual appeal for "cooperation" among the men, in working out the "reduction in force" in an amicable manner.

Such are the rewards which Company Unionism, personnel bunk and speed-up production has brought to the men of Bayway. Unorganized, confused, they will be slaughtered like sheep—by the company which made a net profit of \$111,000,000 last year. There is one answer to this situation, even though it be late: Organize, Revolt! Company unionists everywhere must take a lesson from Bayway. If they do not, a like "reward" is in store for them.

tures of small washing machine motors, and developed a method of doing it faster and better. As an immediate reward she received \$100 under the company's suggestion system. Because of her alertness and skill in doing work to which she is unaccustomed, she is now often used as a substitute operator in various departments."

Although the Foundation granting the awards was named after Mr. Coffin, one of the founders and for a long time president of the corporation, it has been well named. The system it encourages is a veritable coffin for the workers' hopes of just wages under the piece plan of payment.

Miss Kuhn developed "a method of doing it faster and better." She gets \$100 and four shares of stock as a reward. Countless workers after her will have to do it in the way that she discovered. They will be driven forward, with no \$100 and no four shares in sight. Out of it will come a grand piece price slash at the appropriate moment. Net results: Further taking from the workers of the fruits of their increased production.

We regret that we cannot set down a better historical record for Miss Kuhn. We regret that instead of being the first worker to discover in a particular process how to enslave her fellows a bit more, she had rather been the first worker to raise the banner of unionism in the Decatur plant. Some other worker, divinely inspired, will do that in time. Meanwhile, we—you and I—are presented with the problem of educating these unorganized workers out of their rut of throat-cutting. At this moment, they give to the world that "image of stupid strength", which Balzac saw in his postmaster Minoret-Levrault.

In Other Lands

WHAT'S THE LEAGUE BETWEEN "FRIENDS"?

AS the sickening spectre of the countless corpses of the Great War, piled sky-high, passes from the thoughts of the peoples of the world, new wars and rumors of war appear in every quarter of the globe.

The International Federation of Trade Unions reminds us of this in its news bulletin of February 3rd. It points to the bellicose parties in pairs: In Europe, Italy and Jugoslavia, Italy and France, Poland and Lithuania; in America, the United States and Mexico; in Asia, China and Great Britain.

Rightly, it adds: "There was no great danger of war so long as the working classes of the various countries were still exerting a preponderant influence as a result of the war." But now, "the fatal forces to which we owe all wars, and especially the

last war, are preponderant."

In answer to these forces the British Labor groups have begun a counter-attack, in the business of waging peace. Anti-war meetings are being held over the land. The Tory Government has been informed by special deputation of British Labor's stand. Beyond that, the Socialist and Labor International—at its last executive board meeting—decided to link the Socialist movements of the world closer in the interests of peace.

In all of which we note a gradual fading out of faith in the League of Nations as an agency against war. This lack of faith seems to be well founded. For what is the League after all, between friends—or enemies? Controlled by war makers themselves, it is proving a rather anemic force for peace.

THE SOLDIER ON TOP

A world promised peace finds itself to day in the grip of the Soldier. Nationalistic militaristic education is spreading in every country of the globe. Intrigues and Imperialistic ambitions are at a white heat. Europe refuses to surrender its concessions to a rising republican China without something like a fight. America is determined to win the Mexican oil fields for corrupt Doheny interests,



even at the loss of thousands of lives. The sudden cancellation of the smuggling treaty, so that arms can go into Mexico for rebellion, is a significant example of this policy.

Mussolini, by a show of force and with Britain's backing, has cowed the Balkan countries into O.K.-ing his new relations with Albania. He has called Italian nationals in several other lands to the colors, ready for a plunge into blood if everything does not go his way.

An answer has been given to the Soldier, we are happy to report. In Brussels, Belgium, a World League against Imperialism and for National Independence has just been founded. It has grown out of the International Congress against Colonial Oppression. Over 170 delegates were present, from 37 countries, representing labor and anti-Imperialistic organizations from all over the world. The activities of this group will go on apace. We hail it as a beginning of the real international movement, if it proceeds along proper lines, that will make war impossible by striking at the root of war: military nationalistic education and economic rivalry.

OUT OF THE 44-HOUR WEEK

Now we have the facts about the working of the 44-hour week law in Australia. When the unions there began their drive for that number of working hours, a great hue and cry went up. Utter stagnation of the manufacturing industries was freely predicted. Many factories were pictured as all ready to close their doors. Their dismantled ruins were conjured up for the public gaze in many a Tory speech.

New South Wales, nevertheless, went ahead and enacted the law. What has been the result? A comparison of official statistics between that state and Victoria, which clung to the 48-hour regulation, is now possible. It discloses the interesting fact that industry in New South Wales has leaped forward in 1926, under the impetus of necessity. Production had increased greatly. New factories have been opened. More workers were employed than before the new regulation took effect. Manufacturers netted increased profits. In reactionary Victoria, on the other hand, less workers were employed in 1926 than heretofore. The value of plant, machinery and buildings has deteriorated, and actual net production has taken a fall.

The Prophets of Distaster have been put to flight by these facts. They but bear out the recent report to the International Labor Office of the League of Nations, which showed that as a rule, the shorter work-week stimulated manufacturers everywhere to more efficiency, to the introduction of new machinery and to other progressive steps. The shorter work-week is the harbinger of progress!

ACROSS SEAS

Inspiring is the continued growth of the cooperative movement in the midst of European chaos. Under the gray skies of a February morning, in this year 1927, a ship of 3,200 tons set forth from the port of Yarmouth, England, with 13,000 barrels of herring, bound for Russia. The "Fano" was one of several ships that have carried the Cooperative Wholesale Society's fish to the Russian

cooperative markets. In all, 70,000 barrels of herring have been sent by the British C. W. S. to Sovietland this season. That is but a small part of the trade of the C. W. S. fish department. During 1926, over 854,000 pounds of wet fish and 420,000 pounds of dry fish have been disposed of, together with 45,000 heads of poultry, 120,000 rabbits and 9,600,000 English eggs.

Across the seas from Britain have also gone "Ambassadors of Cooperation"—delegates from the C. W. S. to Australian cooperative and labor organizations. Sir Thomas Allen, head of the mission, in a speech at Sydney pointed out that "it is not so much what we earn, but what we have over that matters; not what the wage is, but what is its effective purchasing power." To make "what we have over" the greater for Australian workers, he suggested an extension of the cooperative movement there, as a supplement to the vigorous trade unions. There is no doubt that the mission will have a great effect toward stimulating the growth of Australian cooperatives.

HERODS OF THE HOUR

The Pope is the only man in Italy who dares criticize the Fascist idea, without fear of punishment. This he has again done during the past month, declaring that "The State was made for Man, not Man for the State." All other opponents of Mussolini must hide their dissent in figurative expression. Articles still appear, here and there, denouncing the tyranny of Nero or Caligula—it being understood that the Nero in mind is the Fascist Dictator. In Hungary it is even the same. Horthy cannot be criticized in the press or in any other forum. Consequently, we read much of Herod and other brutal rulers in Magyar papers; Herod and Horthy being one and the same. To such a state has a formerly half-free press come under dictatorship.

Beyond that, a new White Terror is being launched in these lands, and in their sister-country Roumania. Zoltan Szanto, Communist, has been placed under arrest in Hungary, along with a number of others. His fate will probably be that of his fellow-Communist, Rakosi, now serving a term of eight years in a Magyar prison. If against Szanto an attempt will be made to show an overt act of conspiracy to revolution, the same cannot be charged against Stephen Vagi, Independent Socialist, also under arrest. Vagi's sole "sin" was in urging workers to demonstrate before Parliament. Countless radicals and trade unionists of all stripes are being molested and incarcerated, under the White rule of Marie in Roumania. Thus do our present Herods deport themselves, under the smiles of Wall Street—fearful of the day of accounting which their frenzied subjects will one day demand.

GAULIC GLOOM—AND AMSTERDAM

One thing is certain: There is not much of the thing called "industrial peace" in the Land of the Gaul. As foretold in these columns months ago, France is undergoing a mild version of what Great Britain and Germany have tasted for some time past. Poincare's victory was a victory for "stabilization," at the expense of the workers. The 500,000 or more out of employment in Paris understand what this entails. French unionism, so long divided, is in even a worse position so far as doing anything about the crisis, than the German unions have been.

Oddly enough, the hatred of the native workmen has been directed at the immigrants, so many of whom—from Poland and Italy—are now in France. Even the radicals have turned their guns on them. This particular dislike



By a strange irony, the Tory Party in Britain is trying to head off defeat by Labor, by bringing to life the old, decaying House of Lords. Herewith the "London Daily Herald" expresses its opinion of the move.

grows partly out of the fact that the foreigners have come in under contract, thereby having regular employment while the natives starve. It is a striking lesson of how far Labor still has to go in international consciousness. A united international front against the bosses would have led to an entirely different situation than now prevails.

Steps in the direction of international union cooperation are, happily, all the time making headway. Latest of these is the affiliation of the Argentine and Lithuanian union centers with Amsterdam. Likewise, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of (South) Africa—composed of 40,000 black workers—has joined the Amsterdam group. These affiliations were approved at the meeting of the General Council of the International Federation of Trade Unions, held at Amsterdam on January 12-14. The effort of the British Trades Union Congress to affect a conference with the Russian unions on the question of affiliation was defeated, as the Russians had refused to accede to the previous conditions of the I. F. T. U. The coming Congress of the federation shall be held in Paris, where the strengthening of trade unionism is so urgently required.

Still lagging behind the international co-operative action of the Employers and Bankers, Labor is striving to remedy the defect—in spite of petty nationalistic barriers and the ignorance of the masses, fed by the subtle propaganda of the international financiers.



"Say It With Books"



THE NEW NEGRO

NO matter what our field of activity may be, we cannot close our eyes to the new position of the Negro in American life.

With an initial handicap of race prejudice against him and with the almost equally serious drawback of being regarded, even by his "friends", as a sort of "sick man of American Democracy", he has steadily broken through the barriers set for him. In literature, education, art, song, mechanical labor—he has begun to assert himself in a new way.

It can be said, almost without contradiction, that the only American folk music we have is that of the newly discovered Negro spirituals. But it would be a mistake to imagine that that has been his sole sphere of original endeavor. He has begun to think through his own problems and to express his own thoughts in poetry and fiction. And now, with the aid of those who have stood shoulder to shoulder with him, he comes to interpret himself to America in an unusually fine book: "THE NEW NEGRO", edited by Alain Locke and published by Albert and Charles Boni. (New York, 1925).

It is in the migration Northward that we must be chiefly interested. As Charles S. Johnson puts it: "The cities of the North, stern, impersonal and enchanting, needed men of brawny muscles, which Europe, suddenly flaming with war, had ceased to supply, when the black hordes came on from the South like a silent, encroaching shadow." Out of this new movement, thus started, came the Negro of the city—"transplanted from one culture to another" in the course of ten years. Quite objectively, Mr. Johnson presents the labor organization problem arising from this development: "It is believed variously that Negro workers are as a matter of policy opposed to unions or as a matter of ignorance incapable of appreciating them. From some unions they are definitely barred; some insist on separate Negro locals; some limit them to qualified membership; some accept them freely with white workers. The situation of the Negroes on the surface is, to say the least, compromising. Their shorter industrial experience and almost complete isolation from

the educative influence of organized trade unions contribute to some of the inertia encountered in organizing them. Their traditional positions have been those of personal loyalty, and this has aided the habit of individual bargaining for jobs in industry."

Nevertheless, in New York City, "where the crafts are freely open to them they have joined with the general movement of the workers. Of the 735 Negro carpenters, 400 are members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. Of the 2,275 semi-skilled clothing workers practically all are members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. The musicians are 50 per cent organized. The difficulty is that the great preponderance of Negro jobs is still in the lines which are not organized."

We believe, as the days go by, these words of Mr. Johnson will become increasingly correct: "Black labor, now sensitive and insistent, will have the protection of workers' organizations or by the strength of their menace keep these organizations futile and ineffective."

A wider study of the Negro problem is needed from the viewpoint of union labor. That the Negro has come into industry to stay for quite a while cannot be denied. He is in the mines of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, in the slaughter houses of Chicago, in the steel mills of Lackawanna and of Pittsburgh, and in all sorts of other manual and mechanical activities. The union message will not only be a good thing for him—at present disorganized and individualistic. It will also help to stabilize and increase the strength of the unions for the protection of whites and blacks alike. The Negro migrant is "singing as he comes," as Mr. Paul U. Kellogg says, but he is none the less a menace to American conditions—if allowed to remain unorganized.

Our obligation is to understand the New Negro, to realize his new status, to go out and organize him—for the workers rather than for the employers. In getting at an understanding of this problem, nothing is more helpful than this book to which reference has been made. Rather expensive for individuals to purchase, it should be in the libraries of international unions, and in those of district and local unions wherever possible.

THE HELPFUL YEAR BOOK

CUT in price to \$1.50 and reduced somewhat in size in order to bring it to this reasonable amount, the AMERICAN LABOR YEAR BOOK proves to be the same helpful volume for trade unionists that it has been in years past. It is coming to be recognized, more and more, that labor needs at its finger tips facts and figures of all sorts, in order to be equipped for local publicity, for negotiations with employers and for many other emergencies that arise. Nothing can be more serviceable, in a general way than the YEAR BOOK, which includes within a comparatively few pages facts of all sorts that labor men should know. We again recommend it to trade unionists and trade union libraries.

THE GREAT STRIKE

An Epic of Mass Devotion and of Amazing Unpreparedness

WHEN the history of this era is fully written in true prospective, eons from now, the British General Strike will stand out as one of its most significant events.

Four million workmen in eleven hundred unions do not lay down their tools and face the uncertain and perhaps harrowing outcome for nothing. There is a deep underlying reason for such an act, standing a nation on its head as it does and paralyzing its very life. Men are naturally conservative. They are naturally long-suffering and slow-moving. They do not rise in such myriad mass rebellion from mere whimsy.

The chief cause of the General Strike was the decay of British Capitalism. That colossus, grown gouty through gourmandizing, thought to reach health through the further bleeding of its victims—the entire British working class. With the miners the process was to begin.

Men who had gone through the bottomless pit of Black Friday and the exhilarating victory of Red Friday could look forward to the test with equanimity. It was their brothers who were now to try themselves out and see what degree of mass devotion lay among them. In that trial the men showed up with magnificence. The wisdom of the union leadership in cancelling the strike when they did is still the subject of extensive discussion in Britain.

Of the many books and articles on the upheaval that have come from British printing presses of late, the most interesting by far is that issued by the Plebs League, under the title: "WORKERS' HISTORY OF THE GREAT STRIKE". It is likewise most stimulating for labor men and students of labor problems, and its cheap cost makes it available to anyone who wishes to get an insight into the spirit of the British workers.

These definite impressions come out of its perusal: First, the miraculous mass devotion of the rank and file, and second, the amazing unpreparedness of the unions for such a struggle. The latter can be partly understood, when we realize the details that face every trade union leader and for which a trade union staff is generally not half equipped so far as sufficient personnel goes. And yet, the General Strike had been looming as a possible weapon of the workers ever since the narrow escape of Red Friday, July 31, 1925. A closer unity had been woven into the union

leadership, in preparation for some such struggle. When the zero hour came, nevertheless, there was much uncertainty among the Labor leadership. So much was this the case that with the men out and the issue to be faced squarely, both J. H. Thomas and Ramsay MacDonald deplored the affair publicly and spoke more like Government representatives than leaders of the strikers.

Of the men, the entry in the Oxford Railway Bulletin on the course of events at Alverscot gives their view of the encounter. It read: "Alverscot—All out here; God help us if we lose." From all sections of Britain like reports came, of the unity of the men, of their desperate and enthusiastic determination to win. Of the 1,100 unions involved, but three "blacklegged"—and these only in part.

The Plebs' History quotes freely from these strike reports, to show what was transpiring among the rank and file at that time. It notes that the walk-out was most vigorously prosecuted in the more religious sections of the country. Indeed, orthodox religious fervor and industrial revolt mingled in the bulletins from the local centers. A number reminded the strikers to devote their attention to God on Sunday.

When the news came that the Trades Union Central Council had called off the strike, many sections refused to believe it. Others refused to accept the decision as binding. Even the official SCOTTISH WORKER, while carrying the order, ended its issue with the unexpected capitals: "FIGHT ON; LABOR CANNOT LOSE."

But you will have to read the whole account in the Plebs' History to appreciate the tenseness and grandeur of the struggle. So far as the legality of the strike goes (the attack on it having been published in the speeches of Sir John Simon recently issued by the Macmillan Co.), the History correctly says: "The lawyers showed in the General Strike that they will use every legal weapon they can discover to prevent a challenge being made to the divine right of property."

As George Hicks, present chairman of the Trades Union Council, has predicted that this was but the try-out for future general strikes, the mistakes made and the spirit shown are of value in sizing up the outcome of such future encounters.

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